

CITY OF ANGELS™



A SETTING SOURCEBOOK FOR DEMON: THE FALLEN™

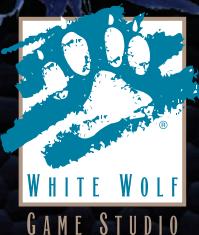
CITY OF ANGELS™

CITY OF DREAMS

It is a city whose influence touches the hearts and minds of millions across the globe. The fallen are drawn to LA's potent mix of power, decadence and decay, and fearsome demons stake their claims amid the city's violent streets and opulent boardrooms. Intrigue and bloodshed abound as ancient rivalries mix with the dizzying possibilities of the modern age, and the stage is set for an epic struggle to shape the city's first Infernal Court.

STREETS OF FIRE

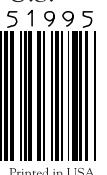
City of Angels thrusts players into the power plays, intrigues and betrayals of fallen lords as they vie for control of one of the richest cities in the world. Will you seize the opportunity for power and glory from the talons of your rivals, scheme from the shadows or unite the outcasts of fallen society in a struggle for freedom and the souls of humankind?



www.white-wolf.com

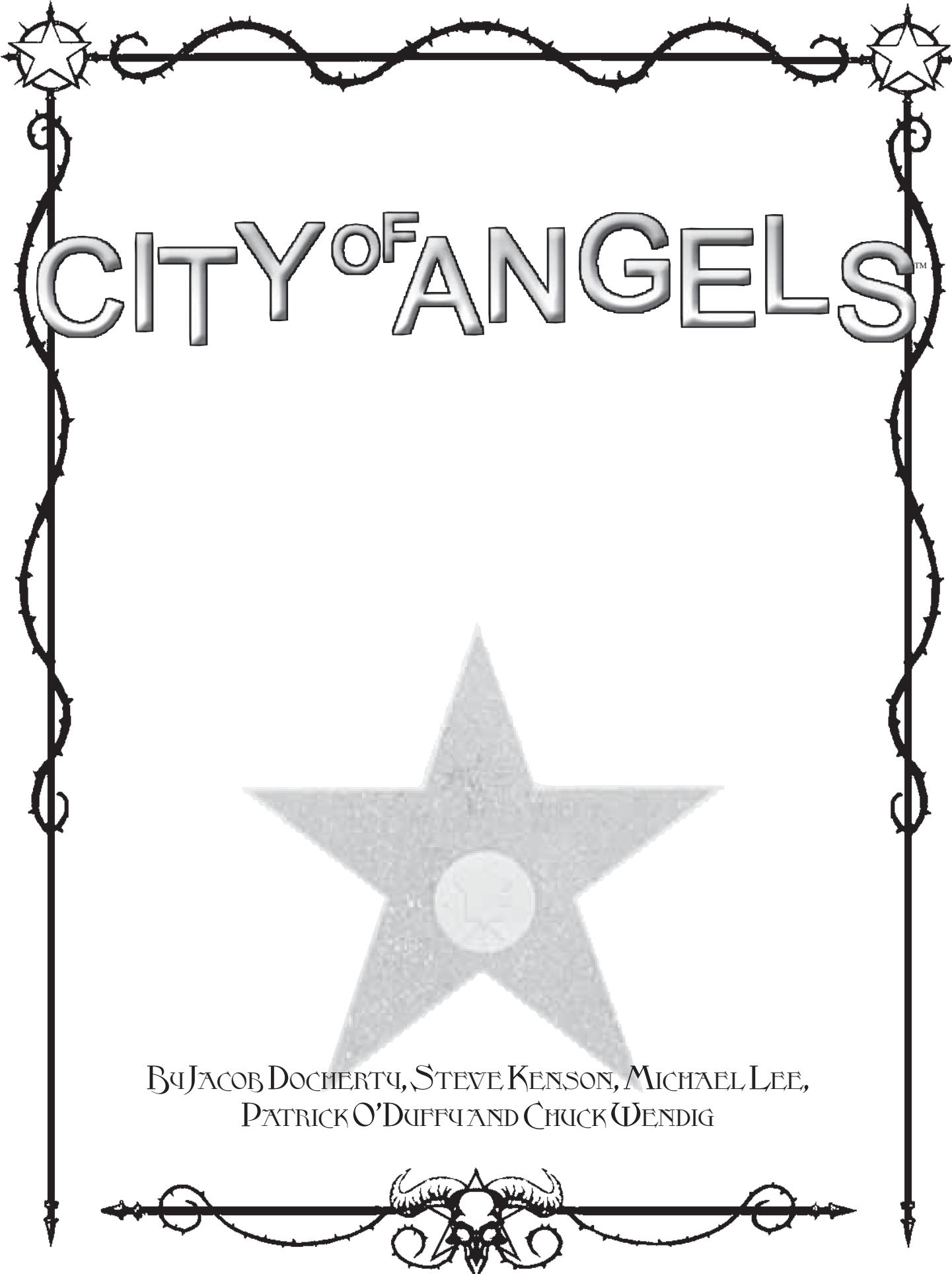
ISBN 1-58846-752-X
WW8211 \$19.95 U.S.

51995



9 781588 467522

Printed in USA



CITY OF ANGELS™

By JACOB DOCHERTY, STEVE KENSON, MICHAEL LEE,
PATRICK O'DUFFY AND CHUCK WENDIG



CREDITS

Authors: Jacob Docherty, Steve Kenson, Michael Lee, Patrick O'Duffy and Chuck Wendig. World of Darkness created by Mark Rein•Hagen.

Storyteller Game System Design: Mark Rein•Hagen

Developer: Michael Lee

Editor: Jasmine Milberger

Art Director: Pauline Benney

Layout and Typesetting: Pauline Benney

Interior Art: Mike Danza, Marko Djurdevic, Alex Lamas, Andy Trabold

Front Cover Art: Andrew Robinson

Front and Back Cover Design: Pauline Benney



1554 LINTON DR.
STONE MOUNTAIN,
GA 30083
USA

© 2003 White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, and for blank character sheets, which may be reproduced for personal use only. White Wolf, Vampire, Vampire the Masquerade, Vampire the Dark Ages, Mage the Ascension, Hunter the Reckoning, World of Darkness and Aberrant are registered trademarks of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Werewolf the Apocalypse, Wraith the Oblivion, Changeling the Dreaming, Werewolf the Wild West, Mage the Sorcerers Crusade, Wraith the Great War, Trinity, Demon the Fallen and Demon City of Angels are trademarks of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters, names, places and text herein are copyrighted by White Wolf Publishing, Inc.

The mention of or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.

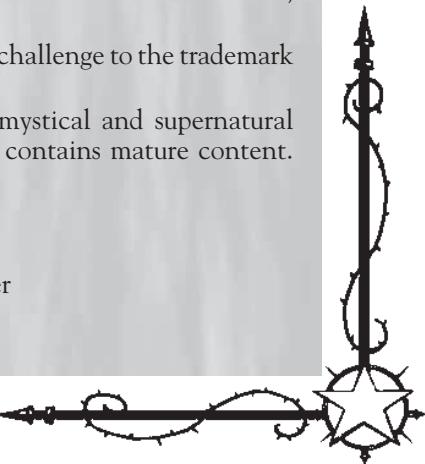
This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. This book contains mature content. Reader discretion is advised.

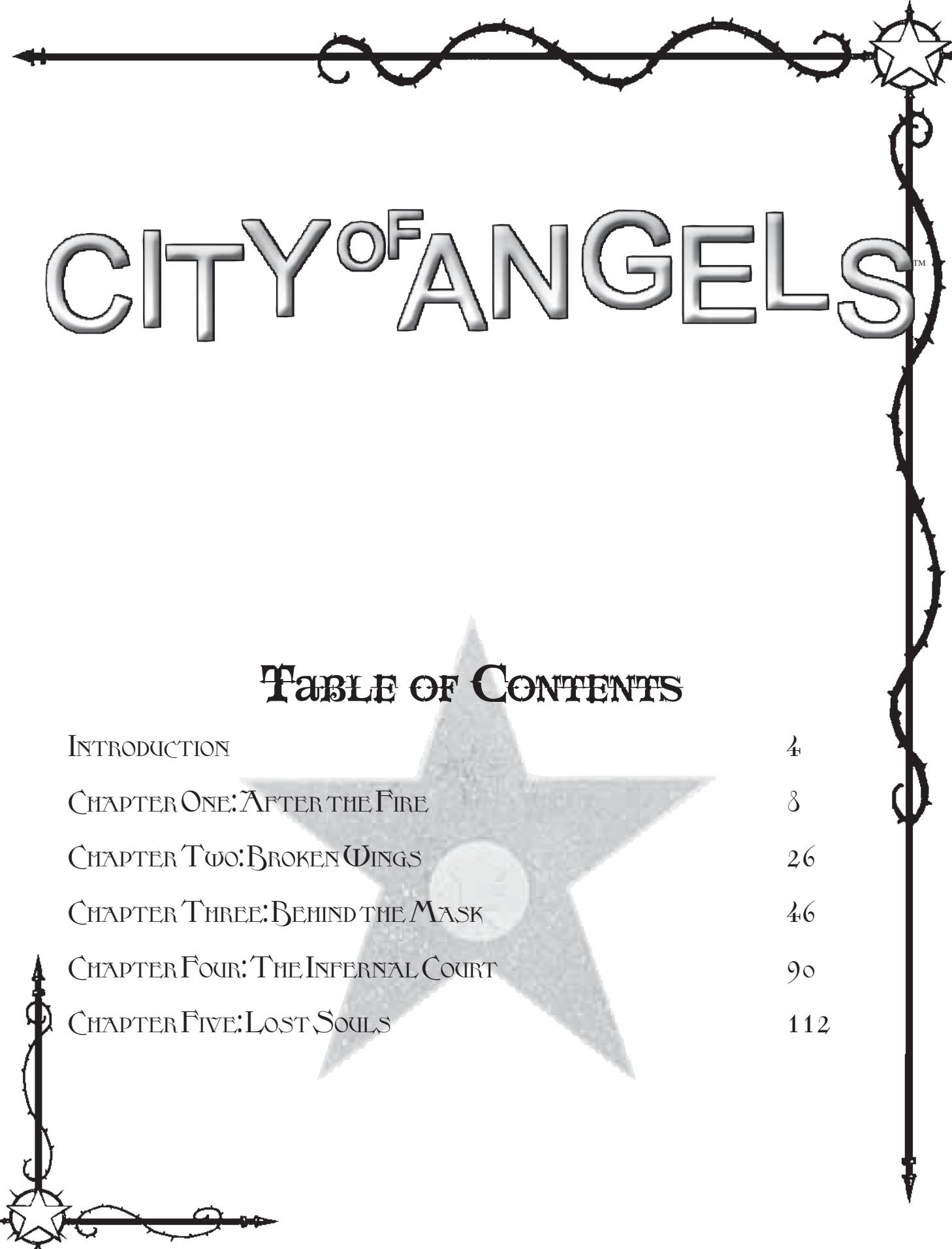
For a free White Wolf catalog call 1-800-454-WOLF.

Check out White Wolf online at

<http://www.white-wolf.com>; alt.games.whitewolf and rec.games.frp.storyteller

PRINTED IN THE USA.





CITY OF ANGELS™

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| CHAPTER ONE: AFTER THE FIRE | 8 |
| CHAPTER TWO: BROKEN WINGS | 26 |
| CHAPTER THREE: BEHIND THE MASK | 46 |
| CHAPTER FOUR: THE INFERNAL COURT | 90 |
| CHAPTER FIVE: LOST SOULS | 112 |





INTRODUCTION

FAITH: *Belief without evidence in what is told by one who speaks without knowledge, of things without parallel.*
— Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary*

Welcome to Los Angeles, a city of dreams swathed in sulfurous mists like a madman's vision of hell itself. Known by many different names (Cleveland with Palm Trees, Circus Without a Tent, La-La Land, Hell-Ay), Los Angeles houses over 8.5 million souls and boasts one of the most diverse cultures of any city on the planet. People flock to this fountainhead of man-made illusions in search of diversion, in search of fame and glory, in search of work, or simply in search of their favorite movie stars. The golden beaches draw the laid-back and the laid-off despite the fact that polluted waters keep most sitting nervously at the shore.

Demon: City of Angels presents the city of Los Angeles in significant detail, touching on its history, geography and self-obsessed culture in the wake of a terrible earthquake and the seemingly miraculous

appearance of what appears to be the lost Prince of the fallen, Lucifer himself. Los Angeles is now a veritable mecca for the fallen angels. The city teems with souls willing to cut any deal they must in order to grab the elusive promise of stardom. The cult of celebrity is an overpowering intoxicant to the starved spirits of the Abyss. Tormented demons stalk the corridors of production companies, haunt the trendy clubs and set themselves up as spiritual counselors in a city that is all too easily lost in the glamour of the Next Big Thing. Even the fallen themselves are drawn to the City of Angels, fighting the depredations of their tormented kin as much as the cynical, exploitative machinations of the entertainment industry itself. Whoever controls Los Angeles also controls the images flowing onto every screen and television around the world, for



good or evil, and the potential for change embodied in the city is too great to ignore.

This book is intended to provide you, the Storyteller, with a complete and compelling setting for your **Demon** chronicle, but many of the concepts contained within (especially the chapters on the infernal court and fallen renegades) can be applied to virtually any setting or story. As ever, the Golden Rule applies: read the book, use what you like and change or discard the rest. It's your story — tell it in the manner that works best for you.

STREETS OF FIRE

Los Angeles in the wake of the Devil's Night earthquake is in many ways a microcosm of the greater conflict between demons and mankind in the modern World of Darkness. The city, once a symbol of wealth and power, lies largely in ruins. The future is uncertain; can the people of Los Angeles rise above the prejudices and excesses of their past and remake the city of angels into a place worthy of the name? Amid the devastation and tragedy of the earthquake lies the opportunity to build a better future. It is a chance for redemption that may not ever come again. Can there be a return to paradise, or is it too late for Los Angeles, and by extension, the world? It is up to the Angelinos — and the city's fallen — to decide.

THEME

The city of angels is a study in stark contrasts, evoking a multitude of powerful themes applicable to your **Demon** chronicle. The fabulous wealth of LA's media elite and the superficial beauty of its celebrities clash with the stark poverty and seething violence of Watts and the *barrios*. Los Angeles is literally a city of dreams, a gateway to wealth and fame for hopeful souls with the right "look" to make it in the movie industry, but the superstar lifestyle is not without its dangers. Hollywood's best and brightest succumb to drugs, alcohol and their own runaway egos, sowing the seeds of their own destruction even as they reap the bounty of their success. It's a place where souls were bought and sold long before the fallen escaped the Abyss, and the demons themselves are no less drawn by LA's promises of glory and power. The conflicting natures of the city and its seductive potential to the fallen give rise to the central themes of this book: the search for faith, the perils of ambition and the struggle for redemption.

The search for faith and the struggle to cultivate it in the collective soul of mankind is one of the core themes of **Demon**, but in Los Angeles the notion of myth versus reality takes on even greater significance. The city of angels can arguably be called the entertainment capitol of the world, home to a multitude of

powerful film, television and music production studios, streaming their messages to human minds all over the globe. It is an undeniably powerful tool in the hands of a cunning manipulator, whether mortal or demon. On a less epic, but no less compelling level, the lure of stardom and the mystique that surrounds modern celebrities has an almost mythical allure that resonates with mortals across every level of human society. Hundreds of aspiring actors travel to Los Angeles every day in search of fame and fortune, fully believing in the Hollywood myth. Their hopes and fears play right into the hands of the city's fallen, who will happily make each one a star — for a price.

On a more personal level, the appearance of Lucifer during the height of the Devil's Night riots creates a crisis of faith for the demons themselves. Many demons are drawn to LA in hopes of finding their lost Prince, though many of them are unsure what they will do once they find him. They are no longer the innocent idealists that turned their backs on heaven; they are embittered survivors of a terrible war and an apparent betrayal by their glorious leader. Lucifer's appearance forces many of the fallen to revisit old beliefs and ask painful questions about their loyalties and ambitions.

Los Angeles' wealth and global influence encourages the highest of personal ambitions, and the city is justly famous for its ruthless power plays and heartless deals. It is a place where the adage "power corrupts" is all but etched in stone along Hollywood Boulevard. The fallen are no less susceptible to the city's temptations. The true lords of the infernal host still lie writhing in the Pit, leaving the riches of the world open to even the lowliest of the fallen. Already a low-ranking demon named Spentu Mainyu has claimed the title of Tyrant of Los Angeles and formed the city's first infernal court — but even this is a cynical tactic to obscure his true ambition of controlling LA's entertainment industry. Will the demons of Los Angeles fall prey to the same temptations that seduce their mortal thralls, turning upon one another as they scramble for the city's temporal power? Can they temper their ambition with their ancient ideals of guiding and protecting mankind before their conflicting agendas destroy what is left of the city?

If some of the city's demons can see past their personal desires and resist the pain of their Torment they will see that there is a great opportunity set before them in the aftermath of the quake. There is a chance to build something better from the ruins. They can use their power to remake the city of angels according to their ideals, creating a new kind of garden where the seeds of human creativity can bear fruit for the sake of the entire world. It is a chance to prove that it's

possible to turn back humanity's slow slide into destruction, and in so doing the fallen might redeem themselves of their past sins. It is a slim hope to be sure, but for beings who once lit the stars no challenge is too great to overcome.

MOOD

There are a number of moods that you as the Storyteller can evoke in a chronicle set in Los Angeles, not the least of which is a pervading feeling of uncertainty and fear for what the future may hold. Everyone in the city senses that LA's future lies in the balance: with the right leadership and a renewed commitment to the people of the city, Los Angeles could enjoy a rebirth that will sustain it for generations to come. But the past has shown that real change is difficult to come by. The Watts riots didn't prevent the Rodney King riots decades later, nor did the discovery of corruption in the police department in the '40's prevent the Rampart scandals fifty years later. There is every possibility that things will go right back to the way they were before the Devil's Night quake, and if that happens the city might never recover.

There are a plethora of other moods that you can evoke, compare and contrast in the devastated city. Los Angeles, sharply divided along economic and racial lines before the quake has, if anything been more starkly separated by piles of rubble and blackened storefronts. Watts is a burnt-out shell that still seethes with anger and the threat of violence, while Beverly Hills has used its wealth and political power to quickly repair the damage and return to its old, shallow pursuits. One can cruise the almost surreal opulence of Rodeo Drive and then a couple of miles later descend into the ruins of the Hollywood suburbs. Anger and despair, desperation and decay war with the glamour and decadence of the city's wealthy elite. It is an uneasy balance that grows more precarious by day, but no one can say for sure which way things will go.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is divided into five chapters, each of which details a specific aspect of the setting, characters and Storytelling opportunities in Los Angeles. Remember, though, that the most important "chapter" in a storytelling game is your imagination. Never let anything in this book act as a substitute for your own creativity.

Chapter One: After the Fire provides information on the history and geography of Los Angeles, including the recent arrival of the fallen, the depredations of the monstrous Earthbound and the devastating events of the Devil's Night earthquake and the riots that followed.

Chapter Two: Broken Wings contains background on the courts, Houses and factions active in the city with Storyteller suggestions on incorporating these elements into your stories and chronicles.

Chapter Three: Behind the Mask provides a wealth of character profiles detailing the major movers and shakers among the fallen in the city, as well as a host of secondary characters and "bit players" — fallen whom Storytellers can use as random encounters, antagonists or merely local color for stories set in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

Chapter Four: The Infernal Court details the organization and inner workings of the ruling courts of the fallen, from the responsibilities of the local tyrant down to the functions of his five ministers.

Chapter Five: Lost Souls introduces the "renegades" of fallen society — demons who exist on the fringes of the infernal court or stand in direct opposition to its corrupt and malevolent ways.

REFERENCE BOOKS

No single book can provide a complete picture of the people, places and culture of a city as large and dynamic as Los Angeles. The following reference works may help provide a more comprehensive picture of the City of Angels and add color to your stories and chronicles:

California Nevada Tourbook, by the American Automobile Association

Yesterday's Los Angeles, by Norman Dash

Islands in the Street: Gangs and American Urban Society, by Martin Sanchez Jankowski

Sixty Years in Southern California, by Harris Newmark

Sex, Death and God in L.A., edited by David Reid

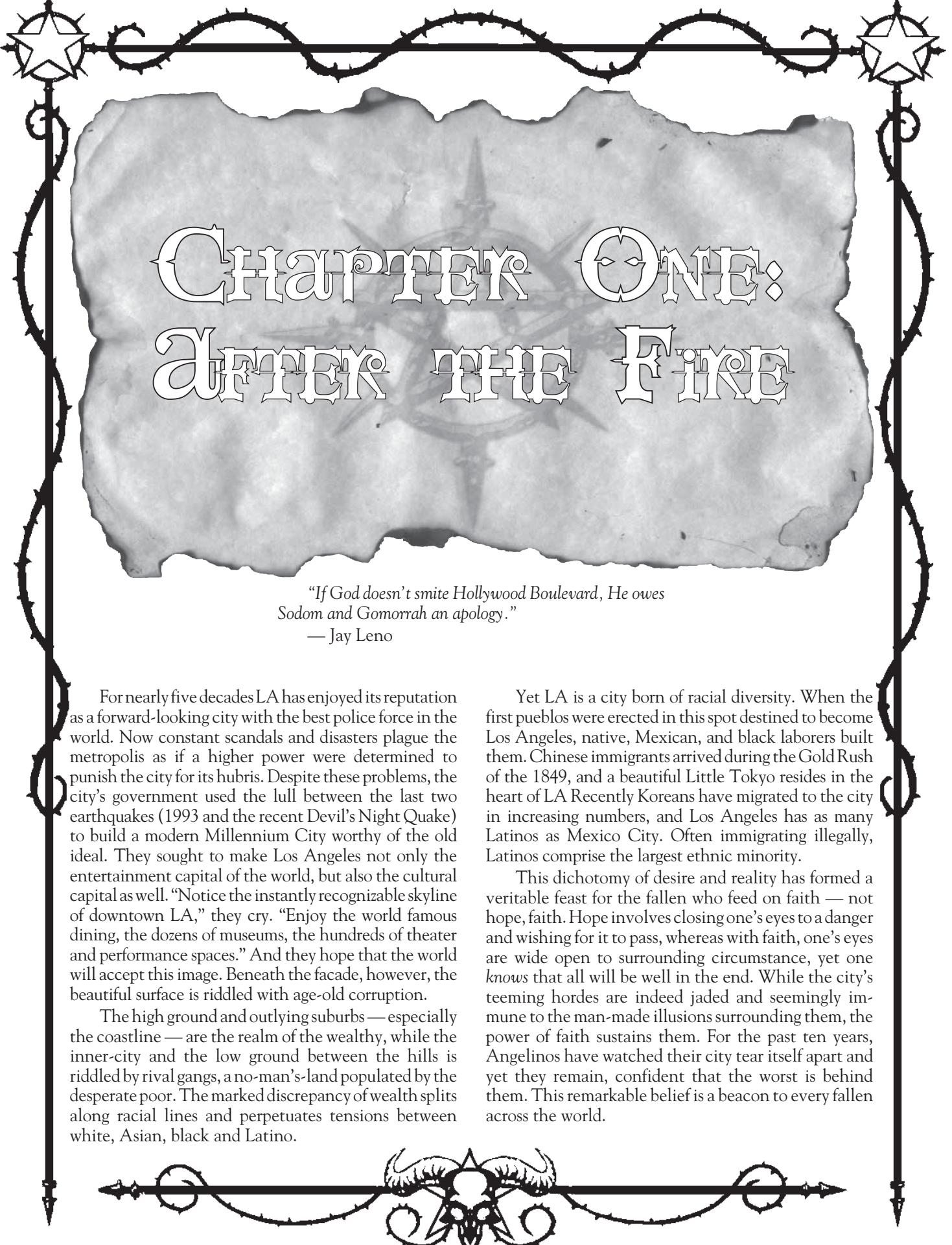
Los Angeles From the Days of the Pueblo, by W. W. Robinson

Los Angeles: A Guide to the City and Its Environs, by the Writers Program of the WPA of Southern California

THE CITY OF ANGELS AND LUCIFER'S SHADOW

More information on the Devil's Night riots, Lucifer's appearance, and the aftermath of the event as seen through the eyes of the fallen can be found in White Wolf's fiction anthology *Lucifer's Shadow*. You don't need the anthology to use this book, but the stories, characters and events described therein are another potential source of inspiration for stories set in Los Angeles.





CHAPTER ONE: AFTER THE FIRE

"If God doesn't smite Hollywood Boulevard, He owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology."

— Jay Leno

For nearly five decades LA has enjoyed its reputation as a forward-looking city with the best police force in the world. Now constant scandals and disasters plague the metropolis as if a higher power were determined to punish the city for its hubris. Despite these problems, the city's government used the lull between the last two earthquakes (1993 and the recent Devil's Night Quake) to build a modern Millennium City worthy of the old ideal. They sought to make Los Angeles not only the entertainment capital of the world, but also the cultural capital as well. "Notice the instantly recognizable skyline of downtown LA," they cry. "Enjoy the world famous dining, the dozens of museums, the hundreds of theater and performance spaces." And they hope that the world will accept this image. Beneath the facade, however, the beautiful surface is riddled with age-old corruption.

The high ground and outlying suburbs—especially the coastline—are the realm of the wealthy, while the inner-city and the low ground between the hills is riddled by rival gangs, a no-man's-land populated by the desperate poor. The marked discrepancy of wealth splits along racial lines and perpetuates tensions between white, Asian, black and Latino.

Yet LA is a city born of racial diversity. When the first pueblos were erected in this spot destined to become Los Angeles, native, Mexican, and black laborers built them. Chinese immigrants arrived during the Gold Rush of the 1849, and a beautiful Little Tokyo resides in the heart of LA. Recently Koreans have migrated to the city in increasing numbers, and Los Angeles has as many Latinos as Mexico City. Often immigrating illegally, Latinos comprise the largest ethnic minority.

This dichotomy of desire and reality has formed a veritable feast for the fallen who feed on faith—not hope, faith. Hope involves closing one's eyes to a danger and wishing for it to pass, whereas with faith, one's eyes are wide open to surrounding circumstance, yet one *knows* that all will be well in the end. While the city's teeming hordes are indeed jaded and seemingly immune to the man-made illusions surrounding them, the power of faith sustains them. For the past ten years, Angelinos have watched their city tear itself apart and yet they remain, confident that the worst is behind them. This remarkable belief is a beacon to every fallen across the world.



History

The story of Los Angeles began on August 2, 1769, when an expedition led by Gaspar de Portola camped for a night by a river called Porciuncula. The captain was delighted by what he saw and his discovery led to the founding of a nearby mission two years later. On September 4, 1781 settlers founded "El Pueblo de la Reyna de los Angeles," or "The Town of the Queen of Angels." It was built for the Spanish aristocracy with the blood of native Indians and African slaves.

The town grew slowly but steadily until it was ceded to the American army during the Mexican-American war after a mostly bloodless exchange. In 1850, Los Angeles was incorporated and named seat of the county that bore the same name. During the California Gold Rush, the city prospered as an oasis for drinking, gambling and whoring. Eventually the city's residents took up ranching, but a series of droughts brought an end to the cattle business. Los Angeles might arguably have died then and there but for the advent of the iron horse. Railroad barons shipped the indigenous oranges back east while launching a massive advertising campaign encouraging people to migrate west. It was an effort to increase the use of the railway and subsequently increase their revenue.

Two things stood in the rail barons' way: Los Angeles had neither an adequate water supply nor a natural harbor. A mighty struggle between the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Free Harbor League ended when the railroad acquired San Pedro and Wilmington. These areas were built into the first municipal harbor in 1914, the same year the Panama Canal was completed. Almost overnight, the Los Angeles harbor became the busiest on the Western Coast.

The water supply they took from the Owens Valley 250 miles to the north, building an aqueduct to carry the melting snow of the Sierras down into the desert. On the day he inaugurated this mighty subjugation of nature, water-bureau superintendent William Mulholland is quoted as saying, "Here it is, take it."

In no other city is hedonism so openly and actively pursued. In 1913, a writer commented, "Virtue has become virulent," and this pursuit of vice has meant that crime has always been rampant in LA. The police force of the early 1900's is now famous for its corruption. It is therefore ironic that amidst such depredation a Prohibitionist named Horace Wilcox founded a subdivision intended as a haven for the righteous. He called it Hollywood. But of course, Los Angeles absorbed Horace's enclave in 1910 during another drought, and a year later, the first film studio was built. The cinematic stars, however quickly moved into the more exclusive environs of Beverly Hills.

As the film industry was building up its famed temples of illusion, a second, much poorer culture was developing

in the West. While the rich built their luxury retreats, the impoverished traveled west to fuel the fires of industry, all the while building their own neighborhoods.

In LA, these communities of wanton wealth and grim poverty are separated only by the thin blue line of the police force, an organization with a checkered past as shady and brutal as any in the great cities of the East Coast. The perceived corruption of the police force constantly set them at odds with the less-fortunate of Los Angeles, occasionally boiling over in disgraceful episodes such as the infamous "Zoot Suit Riots" of 1943, when dozens of furloughed soldiers and sailors beat and raped Latino women and the police did nothing to intervene. Eight years after the Zoot Suit Riots, police officers beat seven Latino youths with gloved fists and wet rags until the walls of the holding cells were covered with blood. Known as Bloody Christmas, the officers mistakenly believed that the boys had maimed a fellow policeman.

There were several small riots in the early part of the decade, culminating in the infamous Watts Riots. On August 11, 1965, police officers pulled over a black motorist for reckless driving. Although he failed a field sobriety test, by the time he was arrested a crowd had formed. What began as a peaceful gathering flared into violence when a rumor circulated that the police were abusing one of the protesters, a pregnant woman. That rumor sparked a fire which would rage for six days, leaving 34 dead and over a thousand injured. Property damage was estimated at forty million dollars, and although the violence never strayed beyond the boundary of Watts, all of Los Angeles locked their doors and prayed.

Until the turn of the millennium, the LAPD had been completely independent of civilian politics. The only control that could be exerted on the police came via the budget and the election of a new chief. Since the city council could not fire an existing police chief, he could only be replaced if the chief retired or was convicted of a felony. As a result the chief of police wielded as much — or more — political power as the mayor. This lack of external oversight only aggravated the public's distrust of the police force, a situation that would bear bitter fruit during a routine traffic stop in 1992.

This was the famous case of Rodney King, whose encounter with police was captured on videotape by one of the city's ubiquitous news flights. The whole tape showed King charging a police officer, then three officers viciously subduing the hapless King with metal batons while other police officers seemingly stood by and watched. However, by the time the tape reached the air King's initial attack had been edited out, so that it appeared the officers had simply pulled an innocent black man out of a car and beat him.

It was this edited tape which played every day on every news station across the world. It was this edited version

which led the world to believe the case was a straightforward example of police brutality. It was this edited image which caused the whole of Los Angeles to offer up a prayer that they would never encounter such police officers.

A year later when a nearly all white jury, who had seen the unedited tape and learned that the police officers had spent five to eight minutes trying to subdue King peaceably and that King had shrugged off two hits from a Taser, acquitted the police officers of all charges, the black gangs decided they would exact their revenge in blood.

LA erupted. These riots were not confined to a single area as the Watts Riots had been, nor did the violence ebb during daylight hours, as it had in the past. All told, the riots claimed 55 lives, injured over 2,000, burned over 800 buildings, and inflicted an estimated damage in excess of \$900 million. It took the LAPD, the LA sheriff's department, the National Guard and federal troops to put an end to six days of assaults, arson and pillage.

The trials and scandals that rocked LA over the next four years included the firing of a police chief for corruption, a massive police scandal in the Rampart division that tainted more than 70 officers, the failure of several high-publicity efforts to rebuild the devastated areas of the city and an energy crisis that menaced the population with rolling blackouts. By 2001, it appeared that the worst was finally over. There were still severe tensions between City Hall and the police department, but relentless internal investigations and media scrutiny began to have a telling effect on the way the LAPD operated. Tensions within the public sectors began to wane, and bold new proposals to restore the ravaged sections of the city were gaining support with local leaders.

It was the calm before the storm.

THE STORM BREAKS

Ironically, given the upheavals that rocked Los Angeles in the latter half of the twentieth century, the arrival of the fallen actually proved somewhat beneficial to the city. In the beginning, the City of Angels was not occupied by any more demons than other cities around the globe, but as time passed and the fallen realized the depth of the city's influence worldwide, a kind of latter-day "gold rush" occurred. Fallen from across the world made their way to Los Angeles, each one eager to bend the movie studios and production houses to their will. These demons quickly moved to enthrall any influential mortal they could find, from government officials to powerful gang leaders in South Central. The result, oddly, was a general muting of the city's internal tensions and general divisiveness, as the fallen focused their energies on building their power base in their own patient, methodical fashion.

On the whole, Los Angeles was a literal banquet of Faith for the angels of the Abyss, replete with multitudes

of souls either so shallow or so desperate that they would sell their souls without a second thought to anyone who could promise them what they wished. As the number of demons in the city swelled to over a hundred, territories shrank and competition for the richer prizes increased. In most cases such confrontations were resolved without conflict as the fallen involved fell back on the rules of rank and precedence that allowed the Infernal Host to function during the war. As the old "pecking order" became increasingly prevalent it also became apparent that it was only a matter of time before one demon or another took the next logical course and laid claim to Los Angeles as its lawful tyrant. Seeing the writing on the wall, a Devil named Spentu Mainyu, one of the first demons to arrive in the city, assumed the title and formed the City of Angels' first infernal court. In reality, the court itself was little more than a façade, with ministers who were handpicked for their rivalries and feuds with one another. The result was an artifice that seemed to impose order, while in reality allowing Spentu Mainyu enough influence and protection to continue his campaign to seize control of the city's entertainment industry.

THE EARTHBOUND

Even as the fallen population of the city swelled and Spentu Mainyu's court sought to impose a modicum of law and order, the demons of Los Angeles were unaware of a trio of monsters gathering in their midst. The Earthbound, awakened from centuries of slumber by the return of the fallen, moved quickly to piece together what remained of their fragmentary cults and pursue an agenda of enslavement and destruction against the angels of the Abyss.

The first of these monstrous creatures to arrive in Los Angeles was a demon by the name of Enshagkushanna, a lesser Earthbound as these powerful beings reckoned themselves, who initially settled in the Hollywood Hills and started his own campaign of conquest aimed at the city's government and entertainment industries. For a few months the Earthbound was highly successful, penetrating offices and studios where Spentu Mainyu had come up short, and in the process enslaving a number of newly-arrived fallen to form a core retinue of protectors and servants. Left to his own devices, Enshagkushanna might have become a serious threat to the city's court within a very short amount of time, but fate intervened in the form of the Earthbound's liege lord, the fearsome monster known as Dagon. Los Angeles had attracted the attention of the great Earthbound Archduke, but not for its wealth or world influence. Dagon informed his vassal that there was reason to believe that the lost Prince of the fallen, Lucifer the Betrayer, was somewhere in the city, and had in fact been there for quite some time. The arch-demon commanded Enshagkushanna to find the Morningstar regardless of the cost, and Enshagkushanna hastened to obey.



Not long after this sudden turn of events a second Earthbound appeared in the city, settling into the violent South Central housing projects. Manishtusu, the mad Lord of Murder, arrived for the same reason that Dagon had taken a sudden interest in the city, and its influence spread like a cancer through the neighborhood's gangs, turning them out like hounds after the scent of the Morningstar. Before long the two Earthbound were in open conflict with one another, touching off sporadic episodes of violence that the press wrote off as a resurgence of gang warfare and Spentu Mainyu's court paid little heed to.

For several months, as summer turned into autumn, the two monstrous Earthbound circled one another like hungry lions, searching for their former Prince and waiting for the right moment to strike. Despite their best efforts, neither side had uncovered any proof that the Morningstar hid among the people of Los Angeles, but as their influence spread and the number of their human and fallen servants increased, the chances of discovery—and open war—grew with each passing day.

DEVIL'S NIGHT

The spark that ignited the City of Angels was struck by another Earthbound, none other than Belial, the Great Beast himself. The fearsome Archduke, drawn to the city like the rest by the lure of the hated Morningstar, quickly grasped the balance of power between the two Earthbound

and approached both in secret. Belial promised to add his considerable might to theirs in return for their service in seeking out the Prince of Lies. Both demons agreed, and were told to await the Great Beast's signal. It came in the form of a 7.2 magnitude earthquake, striking the city in the middle of rush hour on the night before Halloween.

The Devil's Night earthquake devastated the Tri-County area, cutting power and water lines to more than 90% of the city and starting fires that the city authorities were powerless to stop. In the ensuing chaos, Belial unleashed the Earthbound upon the city. The servants of Manishtusu and Enshagkushanna tore through Los Angeles in a frenzy, wielding their power with abandon and reaping an effectively endless supply of Faith from the traumatized populace. These acts of horror and violence further provoked the Angelinos into spasms of looting, arson and murder that quickly coalesced into huge, uncontrolled riots. Billions of dollars of damage and hundreds of lives were lost over the next six days, prompting the governor of California to declare a state of emergency and activate the National Guard.

Despite the presence of armed troops on the street, the riots continued unabated, fueled by the malevolence of the Earthbound and their slaves. The more the National Guard troops tried to suppress the riots, the more inflamed the crowds became, creating a vicious cycle that showed no signs of ceasing. After five days the



city was still in flames, and the city government feared that Los Angeles might not survive. Meanwhile, the noose was tightening around the city as the Earthbound focused their search on the downtown area. Then, at 11:00 PM on November 3, in a plaza near the ruins of City Hall, three hundred Guardsmen, nearly a thousand rioters and agents of nearly every major worldwide news network were stunned into silence by a vision of radiance and power not seen since the world was young.

It was an angel, terrible in its beauty and majesty, blazing like a newborn star over the seething multitudes fighting in the plaza below. People forgot what they were doing and fell to their knees, overcome by the sheer wonder of the sight. The light of the angel's revelation could be seen from all over the city, and for the space of a single heartbeat a hush fell over the ravaged downtown area. Then, as quickly as it had appeared, the vision was gone. Looking back, city officials mark that moment as the high-water mark of the riots; after the appearance of the angel the city seemed to return to its senses, and the violence quickly tapered off. What's more, local churches, mosques and synagogues were flooded with multitudes of people, young and old, their faith in the divine lent new power by the image they'd seen.

No mortal understood the meaning of the vision — numerous theories would circulate in the days and

months following the riots — but every demon across the globe recognized the glorious image. Lucifer, Morningstar, Prince of the Fallen, walked the streets of the City of Angels.

With the sudden reappearance of the Morningstar few demons can resist the call of Los Angeles. They flock to the city, grappling with a host of painful questions. *Why did you abandon us, Lucifer? Where have you been? Is it for this sterile, heartless world that we endured millennia of damnation?* All these questions might at long last be answered, and the fallen have not been slow to seek satisfaction.

GEOGRAPHY

Los Angeles rests on flat plateau between the Santa Monica Mountains to the northwest, the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and the San Bernardino Mountains to the northeast. The heat rising from the valley acts like a lid over a pot, trapping moisture and man-made pollution in a thick, gray pall of smog that hangs over the city well into the evening each day.

The boundaries of Los Angeles encompass over 80 different townships, some incorporated and some independent, which in turn have spread over three counties (Los Angeles, Orange and Riverside). This is why the urban sprawl is also referred to as the Tri-County Area.





THE COAST

The Los Angeles coast covers 72 miles of terrain, including Santa Monica, Venice and Long Beach. Because of the weak foundations the beach provides, most of the beachfront properties were destroyed by the Devil's Night Earthquake.

SANTA MONICA

Jokingly referred to as the "Home of the Homeless," this well-off beach community is indeed home to vast numbers of the unwashed, the unwanted and the unhealthy. This dichotomy makes the city a haven for almost all the houses of the fallen. Devils luxuriate amongst the rich and powerful in their beachfront palaces. Scourges might find themselves drawn to the soup kitchens that feed the army of homeless. Malefactors appreciate the skill to be found in the multitude of shops. Devourers move through the booming culture of street performers. Defilers relax on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and Slayers are drawn to the despair of the homeless. Of all the Houses, the Fiends take the greatest interest in Santa Monica, due to the proximity of UCLA as well as the eclectic nature of the intellectualism that pervades this community. The homeless were prime participants in the riots that followed the earthquake, causing severe damage that the city is only beginning to rebuild.

- **The Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center** is located in Westwood, the village community that grew up around UCLA. The museum is heavily funded by the Armand Hammer estate, the wealthy industrialist whose name the museum bears. It often hosts exhibits of rare antiquities in addition to its excellent collection of paintings by masters such as Rembrandt, Van Gogh and Monet. It also houses a Da Vinci manuscript with over 360 drawings as well as a number of ancient stone tablets written in an as-yet untranslatable script. Local Fiends and Cryptics in the area believe the tablets to be relics from the age immediately after the War of Rage, and are eager to study them if an opportunity presents itself.

- **The Veterans Memorial Cemetery** is located along the San Diego Freeway in West Los Angeles, containing acres upon acres of identical white headstones, marking the final resting place of men and women who lost their lives in service to their country.

- **The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)** is one of the best-known universities in the world. Situated on a campus that covers 420 acres, UCLA enrolls more than 34,000 students a year. Notable areas on campus include: Schoenberg Hall and Royce Hall, where concerts and theatrical productions are performed for the campus and the general public; the Edwin W. Pauley Pavilion, a major sports complex that housed part of the

3RD STREET PROMENADE

The 3rd Street Promenade is a three-block section of boulevard that is a calliope of shops, cafes, bookstores and restaurants in Santa Monica. Many of the shops and stores were damaged to one degree or another by the riots but remain open for business. Several are owned and operated by the fallen:

- **The White Tiger** is run by Andrew Lau. Essentially, The White Tiger is a curio shop specializing in Chinese esoterica, and as such does a modest business among the culturally oblivious American tourists. A newly arrived demon, however, might find herself drawn to the back room, where Mr. Lau keeps several family heirlooms that resonate strongly with imbued faith. (see Chapter Three, page 58)

- **Vertigo Coffeehouse** was opened by Julian Forester (see Chapter Three, page 50) as a parlor for political conversations. The fallen of the city are all welcomed to a secret, private back room, and are all expected to leave their rank and rancor at the door. Like the salons of revolutionary France, any topic is permissible and excessive emotions encouraged, but being personally offensive is frowned upon. If a junior fallen is too rude to a more senior demon, she might find herself a target of that senior's wrath. All are free to speak, but only the foolish speak freely

- **Johnson & Crowley Booksellers** is not open to the public, although the door is directly across from the very popular Black Box Theater and easily seen. Customers are seen by appointment only, and those appointments are given out only rarely. They are antique book dealers. Fallen with police contacts might learn that there is no Mr. Crowley, and Mr. Johnson is currently under investigation for the suspicious disappearance of his live-in au pair (see Chapter Three, page 57).

- **Black Box Theater** is one of the first of the 99-seat theaters, so called because the regulations of the actors union a performer must be paid more if they play to an audience of a hundred or more. The Black Box Theater has been open since the sixties and specializes in one-acts and plays with themes of racial equality. The current star is an Hispanic performer named Carlos Reyes (see Chapter Three, page 75), whose monologues on the sufferings of the Mexican-American in Los Angeles are passionate without being inflammatory.

- **Khau Kaen** is a world-renowned Thai restaurant mainly because of the chef, Tommy Yongchaiyut (see Chapter Three, page 76) who arrived in this country in the early seventies. Tommy is famous for two things: his lemon chicken and his temper. He has been known to physically eject customers who request special orders, and in the eighties he published an ad in the *LA Weekly* defying local food critics to find fault with his lemon chicken. There were many takers and not one negative review.

1984 Olympic events; the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden, including bronze sculptures by Henry Moore; the Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden, containing eight acres of native, subtropical and exotic plants (a place where young women are cautioned not to walk alone); the Wright Art Gallery, which hosts major art exhibits all year; and the Anderson School of Business, regarded as one of the top business schools in the country.

UCLA suffered considerable damage from rioters in the first few days of the Devil's Night riots, with extensive property damage to administrative buildings and the school library. There are rumors that a number of very old and closely-guarded manuscripts of unknown provenance were taken from the library vaults during the violence, and though an investigation is being quietly pursued by the school and the local authorities, the culprits have not been found.

- **The Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine** is located in the ritzy neighborhood of Pacific Palisades. The Shrine is a 10-acre site with a lake and a "wall-less temple" housing the Gandhi World Peace Memorial. There is also a bird refuge, a sunken garden and various scale-model buildings representing the five major religions of the world. The shrine is watched over by LA's renegade fallen (see Chapter Five), and is the site of their infrequent meetings.

- **Century City**, located just west of Beverly Hills, is a combination of high-rise office buildings and a massive shopping complex, all occupying several city blocks, and was built by optimistic developers as a mini-city of the future. There are numerous law offices as well as doctor's offices (many specializing in cosmetic surgery) in the high-rises and the expensive Century City Hospital complex on the south side of the area. ABC has a huge entertainment complex located there, featuring several large movie theaters and the Schubert Theater. The Century Plaza Hotel is home to travelers from all over the world. The Century City Shopping Plaza has movie theaters, major department stores, trendy boutiques, bistro-type restaurants and a huge parking complex which is often used to film car chases for action movies.

The Devil's Night earthquake and the resulting riots caused millions of dollars in damage to the Century City complex, affecting the foundations of the Century Plaza Hotel and causing fires at the Shopping Plaza that burned for 36 hours before firefighters could gather a sizeable enough police escort to hold looters at bay so they could fight the blaze. Owners and investors have been abandoning their stake in the devastated complex by the score, and rumor in the Infernal Court has it that a group of Reconcilers are seeking funds to buy into Century City, perhaps with

the intent of fulfilling the developers' original goal of creating a self-sufficient community.

- **Los Angeles Mormon Temple** is one of the largest Mormon temples in the world, dominated by a 15-foot-tall golden statue of the angel Moroni, perched high atop a 257-foot tower. The sanctuary itself is closed to non-Mormons, but tours are given of the rest of the facility, and the vast genealogical library is open for the general public to use.

For days after the earthquake local tabloids carried a story that claimed the temple's angelic statue came to life when it was struck by the light of Lucifer's revelation, climbing down from its tower and wandering the temple until nearly dawn. Reportedly, the angel was confronted at one point by church elders, and the statue spoke to them in a language that none could understand. Church officials refuse to confirm or deny these stories, or rumors that some of the angels' speech was recorded and kept for later study.

- **Culver City** is home to a number of movie studios, past and present, including lots belonging to greats such as Selznick and DeMille, RKO Studios, United Artists, Desilu, MGM, Lorimar and Sony.

MALIBU

Malibu was originally part of a large land grant owned in the early part of the century by a woman named Mary Rindge. Rindge fought a 27-year court battle to hang onto her property in face of LA's desire to build a road from the coast inland to the Valley. Rindge ultimately lost her case in the Supreme Court, and seeing the writing on the wall began to sell off parcels of her land. One of these parcels, a very exclusive beachfront area, became the Malibu Colony or simply "The Colony". Much like Fire Island in New York, The Colony was a place where writers, artists and people in the movie industry fled to escape the pressures of business in Hollywood and Beverly Hills in the 1930s and 1940s. Though the area no longer holds the same reputation for decadence and excess that it enjoyed in its heyday, the area is still home to many actors and artists, many of whom saw their multimillion-dollar homes damaged or destroyed in the Devil's Night quake.

- **The J. Paul Getty Museum** was built on the estate of the former billionaire and overlooks the California coast. This world-renowned landmark is a recreation of an ancient Roman villa that holds a magnificent collection of Greek and Roman antiquities and illuminated manuscripts, as well as rooms of 18th and 19th century art and furnishings.

- **The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area** is full of Indian sites and has been used for cabins and retreats, movie locations and numerous ranches. It includes state beaches, county parks, canyon preserves and many scenic corridors. There are at least



24 different park areas, as well as the famous Paramount Ranch. 150,000 acres of rugged mountains, steep canyons, woodlands and beach are included in this area, providing plentiful areas to visit for hikers and campers. The recreation area has been officially closed since the earthquake, as the local park service attempts to round up the scattered bands of homeless people who fled into the area to escape the worst of the Devil's Night riots.

VENICE

Originally founded by Abbot Kinney, a native of New Jersey who had to move west for his health, the city was designed around a 15-mile network of canals based on those in Venice, Italy. Unfortunately, in 1930 many of these canals were filled in, but some remain as a memorial to Mr. Kinney's artistic vision. Venice Beach is a laid back community of aging hippies, unemployed actors and beach bums, famous for its bikini-clad bikers and rollerskaters.

Venice is most popular with the European visitors because of its Old World appeal, and has become the home of several fallen Cryptics. Two factors explain the presence of these demons: first, it is near to LAX, serving the faction's stated goal of controlling major transportation hubs around the world. The second reason revolves around an obscure piece of local history. Legend has it that the explorer Juan Cabrillo possessed an ancient sextant of unusual accuracy, but lost it on an expedition in Southern California. Gripontel (see Chapter Three, page 60), a leading light of the Cryptics, believes that the legendary sextant might possibly be an item he created for mortal navigators during the Age of Wrath. The tool was designed to lead its bearer to any destination she desired, but afterwards had a habit of disappearing. Gripontel has settled in the area in hopes of locating the lost relic.

MARINA DEL REY

Marina del Rey is an upscale beach community sporting colorful Cape Cod-style buildings along the harbor that house trendy shops and restaurants, including subsidiaries of famous Italian eateries in San Francisco.

CATALINA ISLAND

Catalina Island serves primarily as a vacation spot for the excessively wealthy who don't wish to travel far. Easily reached by ferry, the island (full name Santa Catalina Island) swarms with tourists during the day, but becomes isolated by night. Naturally the riots of Devil's Night never reached the island but the earthquake did inflict a fair amount of damage. Catalina Island has recently become the lair of the Earthbound demon Enshagkushanna (see chapter Two, page 33).

BEVERLY HILLS

Beverly Hills has never been incorporated into Los Angeles, possessing an independent police force and governing body. Its fame for wealth is well deserved. For the

fallen it is surprisingly fallow ground — what use have the rich for faith? However, the allure of money has attracted Devils who are as concerned for power as they are for retinues of thralls. Defilers also find themselves drawn to the area's culture of status and beauty. The autonomy of this city has always protected it from the worst of the social unrest that has plagued LA, and such proved to be the case for Devil's Night. Earthquake damage in the city was moderate, but much of it has already been repaired — in Beverly Hills, appearance is everything.

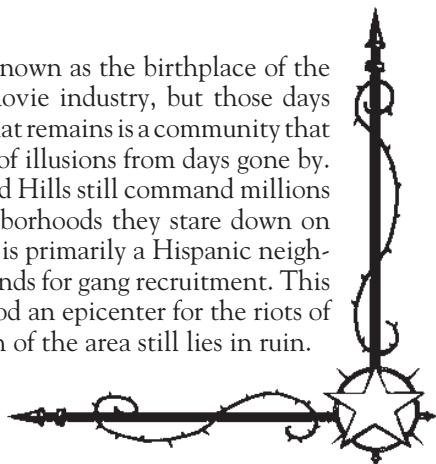
- **Rodeo Drive** is the place where people with more money than sense shop. Surgically-enhanced shop assistants are expected to sell attitude along with their merchandise. What the merchandise is does not matter so long as it has the proper tag or emblem. Such is the importance of this self image that Rodeo Drive was completely repaired and open for business two days after the Devil's Night riots.

- **Sunset Boulevard**, known locally as Sunset Strip, is primarily a tourist trap. Its multitude of clubs, restaurants, and shops (such as The Roxy, The Rainbow Bar & Grill, the original Spago, the Viper Room, the Comedy Store) are world-renowned but avoided by the locals (except the tasteless rich) because of the attitude of the employees and the steep prices. Because ironically, the outside dressing of the Strip is less important than what is inside, the Strip was quickly and easily repaired after Devil's Night. Isaiah Lincoln (see Chapter Three, page 57) works the Roxy as a bouncer.

- **The Beverly Hills Hotel**, also known as the Pink Palace, is practically a temple to hedonism, and as such tends to be the center of Defiler activity for the city. And yes, the entire hotel is done in pink. The bar and restaurant are open to the public but only the rich, beautiful or popular can afford to stay there long. Unscrupulous agents come here to make deals with even more unscrupulous producers while the clients lounge around trying to look unconcerned while attracting as much attention as they can. Here is where Barbie Wentworth (see Chapter Three, page 76) comes to watch and be watched, and a few tables away sits Sally Finn (see Chapter Three, page 70) with her cell phone glued to her ear.

HOLLYWOOD

Hollywood is best known as the birthplace of the studio system for the movie industry, but those days have long since past. What remains is a community that dwells in the memories of illusions from days gone by. Houses in the Hollywood Hills still command millions of dollars but the neighborhoods they stare down on have gone to seed. This is primarily a Hispanic neighborhood and prime grounds for gang recruitment. This poverty makes Hollywood an epicenter for the riots of Devil's Night, and much of the area still lies in ruin.



• **The Walk of Fame** is another world famous tourist attraction. Covering several city blocks, consisting of over 2,000 tiles and swept six times a day, the walk is the cleanest attraction that has ever encouraged people to walk all over it. This is the main haunt of Mae West (see Chapter Three, page 86).

• **The Museum of Death**, the door of which is next to Bela Lugosi's star on the Walk of Fame, contains such items as a baseball autographed by Charles Manson and original paintings by John Wayne Gacy. Otherwise it is filled with information and displays concerning suicide, mass murderers and other aspects of unnatural terminations regardless of taste or propriety. It is numbing to the average person, but heaven for the Goths of the city. What police suspect is that the owner of the museum, Michael Gutenov (see Chapter Three, page 87), is no longer content with preserving the efforts of other people but now wants to add his own mark to the scene.

WEHO

WeHo is short for West Hollywood, and is also known as Boy's Town. It is the second largest gay community in California (the biggest is the Castro district in San Francisco). It is a tidy, middle class area with a healthy street life to the outside observer. WeHo suffered greatly from Devil's Night. First the earthquake did massive damage, then the proximity of South Central and Hollywood meant much of the rioting spilled over into WeHo, and finally the resurgence of religion following Lucifer's brief reappearance has caused an increase in hate crimes in the area. The community is the territory of Vohu Mano (see Chapter Three, page 72), one of the most prominent fallen of the city.

• **The Miracle Mile** is an exception to the otherwise affluent WeHo. This section of Wilshire Road in the southeast part of WeHo has become a popular image of urban decay. Once a bustling business district, it now stands abandoned and broken, and is frequently used by the film industry whenever they need a post-apocalyptic feel. Ironically its abandoned deprivation spared the Miracle Mile from much of the damage of the Devil's Night Riots but not the earthquake. Robin Jang (see Chapter Three, page 81) haunts this area, punishing whatever drug dealers he happens upon.

PASADENA

Pasadena is a bustling, middle-class suburb. A newly finished mall permits people to avoid the evils of freeway travel and inflated costs, and an influx of college students into Old Town has caused an increase in the night life. Pasadena is built practically on the San Andreas Fault, and as such usually suffers the worst in earthquakes, but paradoxically suffered only minor damage from the Devil's Night quake. The area did suffer a large amount of property damage during the riots that

followed, however, and the community has since formed a well-organized — and aggressive — citizen's watch.

• **The Rose Bowl** is famous for its New Year's Day parades and college football, but of more interest to the fallen is the flea market held here in the parking lot on the second Sunday of every month. Many different trinkets have found their way into this market and while most are junk, some are of great value. Nash Alhomany (see Chapter Three, page 63) is a common sight from the moment the Market opens at sunrise until after it closes at sunrise the following morning. He prowls the grounds, darkly muttering to himself about thieves and treasures.

• **The Huntington Library** is a combination botanical garden/museum/library, and has been closed for repairs since Devil's Night, but the city council is striving to convince the caretakers to reopen as a demonstration of how LA is getting on with life. The gardens include the Shakespeare, Palm, Herb, Desert, Zen, Rose, Australian, Subtropical, Camellia, a lily pond, and, of course, an orange grove. The library houses one of the world's great collections of rare books and manuscripts, including a Gutenberg Bible, the Ellesmere Chaucer and Ben Franklin's handwritten autobiography. The art gallery contains 18th-century British and European paintings, rare tapestries, porcelains, miniatures, sculpture and furniture. Three different fallen call the Huntington Library home. Hannah Klein (see Chapter Three, page 69) rules the library proper, while Violet Takahashi (see Chapter Three, page 80) tends the gardens as Head Gardener, and Nathaniel Hildalgo oversees the art gallery.

• **The California Institute of Technology (Caltech)** is an internationally-renowned institution that has been home to some of the great scientific minds of the past century. Of particular interest are the miles and miles of tunnels in which clever students have run some frighteningly realistic live action games. The campus has become a favorite of local Fiends, who are drawn to the institute's cutting edge research into quantum mechanics and nanotechnology.

• **Descanso Gardens**, located in La Canada Flintridge, is home to 100,000 camellias from around the world, as well as roses, lilacs, orchids and other exotic flora. There is a Japanese garden and teahouse located on the grounds, and horticultural lectures are presented in the nearby George Van de Kamp Hall.

• **The Windsor Home** remains one of the most popular sites for young men to test their courage and frat houses to test their pledges on Halloween night because of local lore involving bizarre hauntings and a string of gruesome murders in the old mansion. The crimes were never solved, but since then two tragic accidents have claimed the lives of curiosity seekers. Both involved healthy young men slipping over a banister and falling to their deaths. In the second case the accident was



witnessed by several friends who swear the youth was picked up by an invisible force and thrown over the rail. Nowadays the grounds are closed but determined people still manage to find their way in. Mauricio "Moco" Garcia (see Chapter Three, page 81) guards the grounds at night and kept the old home from the hands of any would-be arsonists during the riots.

• **Angeles National Forest** covers 650,000 square acres in the rugged San Gabriel Mountains, with terrain running the gamut from desert to high mountain ridges and heavily-timbered areas that actually see snow in the winter. There are more than 80 campgrounds, picnic grounds and five major skiing areas.

BURBANK

This suburb contains some of the busiest movie studios in the world, including Universal and Walt Disney Studios, surrounded by a largely bedroom community for Angelinos working in the studios and downtown.

• **Los Angeles Equestrian Center** is where the wealthy pamper and display their prize horses. A major fire here during the riots was suppressed through the heroic efforts of the local fire departments and a large crowd of local volunteers, saving the vast majority of the animals from the fire. As a gesture of thanks to the community the center has since held open house days on the weekend to the general public, conducting tours and offering free riding lessons.

• **Universal City**, originally a chicken ranch, was purchased by Carl Laemmle in 1915 and converted to a movie studio, making it the only "city" devoted entirely to movie and television production. Located south of the Media District in Burbank, this is a very busy collection of shops and restaurants and features a tram tour of the Universal Studios' back lot, augmented by attractions based on *King Kong* and *Battlestar Galactica*. There is also an Entertainment Center where live shows are performed several times a day and features daring stuntpeople who recreate notable action settings such as *Conan*, *Star Trek* and *Miami Vice*. A fantasy recreation of New York, called "Citywalk," also contains expensive stores and trendy restaurants. Finally, the complex contains the Universal Amphitheater, which hosts major concerts during the summer months.

Since the earthquake, Universal City has been the site of numerous community service and entertainment programs for homeless families and children injured by the recent violence.

GRIFFITH PARK

Griffith Park covers approximately 4,100 acres of scrub and hills at the east end of the Santa Monica Mountains, and is possibly the largest city park in the world. Mayor Horace Bell accepted the parcel of land on behalf of the city from Colonel Griffith J. Griffith in 1896,

despite personal suspicions that the generous gift was likely little more than an elaborate attempt at tax evasion. Then, in 1903, Griffith was involved in a sensational trial; he stood charged with the murder of his wife after accusing her of conspiring with the Pope to have him poisoned. He spent two years in San Quentin prison, and upon his return to freedom offered the city \$100,000 dollars to build an observatory, though the city refused to have anything to do with him. When Griffith died in 1919 he left the city \$700,000 dollars for an observatory and a Greek-style theater. As Griffith was no longer around to embarrass the city fathers, his bequest was finally accepted.

The park is home to the Los Angeles Zoo, the Griffith Park Observatory and Planetarium, the Greek Theater, Travel Town (an outdoor museum of railroad engines and cars) and a huge carousel, as well as recreational facilities, picnic areas, golf courses, horse trails and wilderness areas.

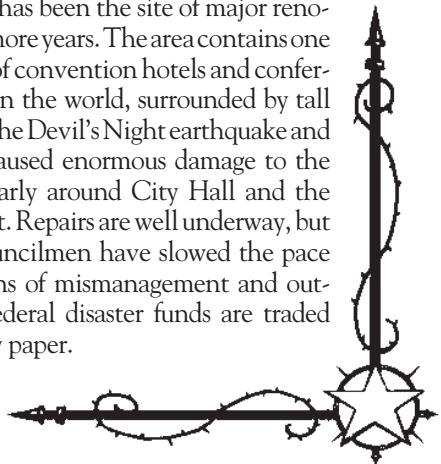
• **The Los Angeles Zoo** covers 113 acres and contains displays of more than 2,000 animals from five continents depicting their natural settings. There are wildlife shows and visitors are allowed to bring picnic lunches onto the grounds. Nearby are the remains of the original LA Zoo, which was abandoned when the new one was built. The dark caves, passages and rusting cages provide a nightmarish site for the city's Blood Court (see Chapter Two, page XX) to gather on the nights of the new moon.

• **The Griffith Park Observatory and Planetarium**, located on Mount Hollywood, is an excellent place to see a panoramic view of the City of Angels. On clear evenings the twin refracting telescopes can be used to view the heavens and the sky is reproduced in the indoor planetarium. There is also a Hall of Science, with an exhibition depicting humankind's interaction with space. The highlight of the observatory for most visitors is the Laserium, in which lasers and music are combined into mind-boggling shows — another favorite haunt of the more wistful Fiends.

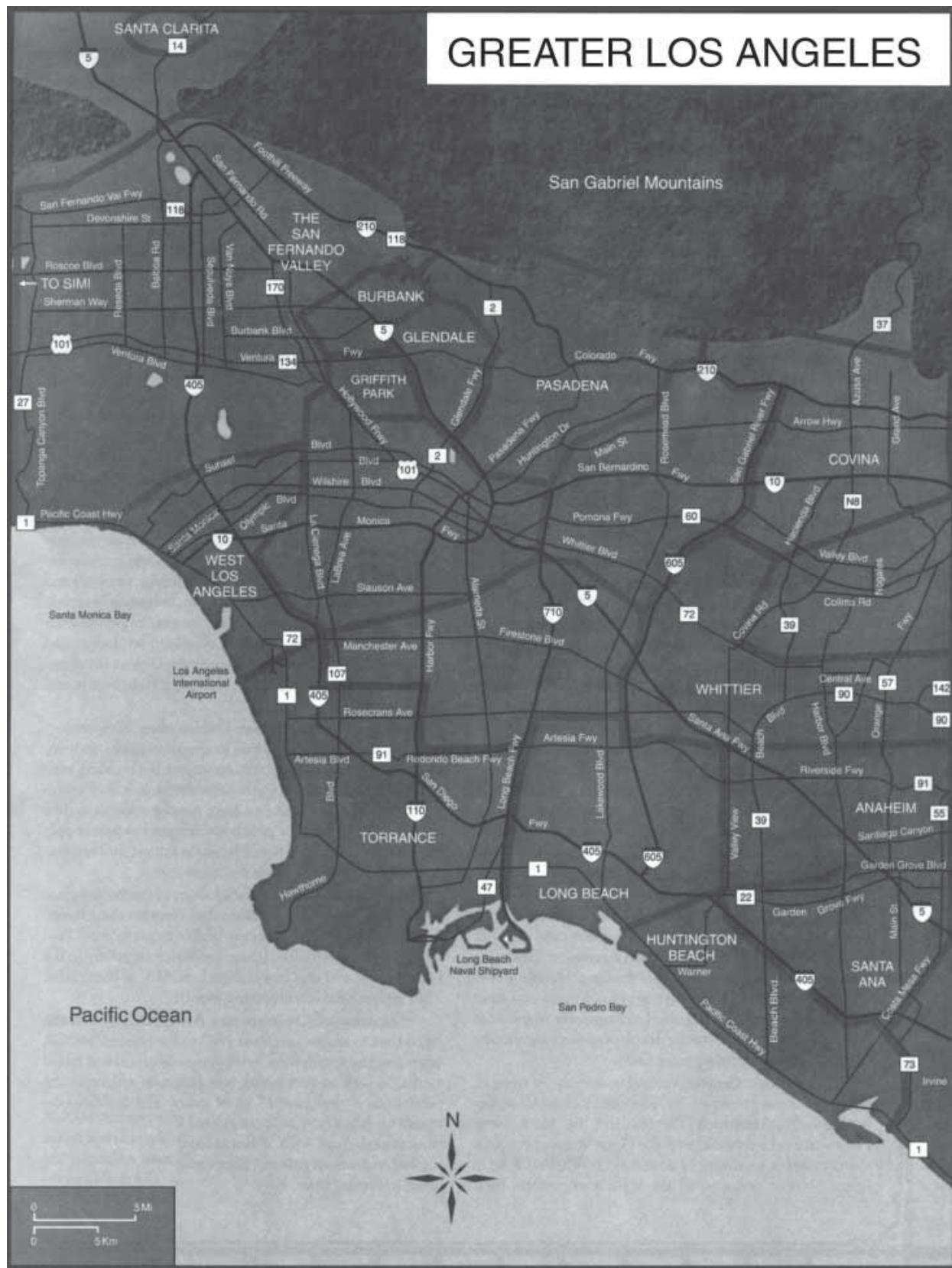
• **The Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum** uses paintings, artifacts and audiovisual shows to depict the history of settlement across the United States.

DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

The downtown area has been the site of major renovations for the twenty or more years. The area contains one of the largest collections of convention hotels and conference centers of any city in the world, surrounded by tall towers of glass and steel. The Devil's Night earthquake and the riots that followed caused enormous damage to the downtown area, particularly around City Hall and the downtown police precinct. Repairs are well underway, but feuds among the city councilmen have slowed the pace substantially as allegations of mismanagement and outright embezzlement of federal disaster funds are traded back and forth in the city paper.



GREATER LOS ANGELES



• **Our Lady of Angels Cathedral** remains relatively unaffected by the recent earthquake and riots, except, obviously, for the sudden rush of lapsed Catholics and new believers. It is a classically built stone cathedral with flying buttresses and soaring stained glass windows depicting the archangel Michael rebuking Satan — local clergy believe it to be a miracle that the windows escaped the earthquake unscathed. The bishop who oversees the city is Antonio Gabrelli (see Chapter Three, page 70).

• **Olvera Street** is one of the oldest streets in Los Angeles, brought back to life in the 1930s as a Mexican Marketplace. There are numerous sidewalk shops built in the adobe walls as well as stalls and street vendors selling handicrafts from Mexico. The street continues to do brisk business despite serious damage from the riots.

• **St. John's Church** is a replica of an 11th century church in Toscanella, Italy. Damaged by fire during the riots, the church officials are trying to raise money to begin a complete restoration of the structure. The great church sits dark and silent after sunset, and it is here that the city's infernal court gathers on the night of the new moon, performing the rituals of fealty beneath the high arches of the chapel.

• **St. Sophia Cathedral** is a Greek Orthodox church built with beautiful stained-glass windows, large-scale murals, gilded woodwork and crystal chandeliers. Incredibly, the church escaped Devil's Night completely unscathed, convincing many Angelinos, mortal and fallen alike, that the site is under divine protection.

• **Evergreen Cemetery** is the oldest cemetery in the city. The mortal remains of many of LA's movers and shakers lie in state there. Rumors abound that a shadowy figure watches over the cemetery after dark, keeping would-be vandals from disturbing the graves.

• **Dodger Stadium** was built in a predominantly Hispanic area once known as the Chavez Ravine, and hosts both professional baseball and large concerts year round.

• **Chinatown** took shape in the rundown areas northeast of the city center in the late 1800s. Now more than one-fifth of Chinese people in the U.S. live in Los Angeles County. The region suffered severe damage during the Devil's Night riots, but the notably insular residents are in the process of quietly rebuilding the ruined shops and restaurants.

• **Little Tokyo** is home to the second-largest Japanese population outside of Japan, exceeded only by San Francisco. The City Market, a wholesale produce exchange, was founded by Japanese and Chinese growers in 1909, followed by the Flower Mart in 1914. Today the area is host to the elegant, 21-story Otani Hotel and four shopping centers, all heavily damaged by the recent earthquake and undergoing renovation.

• **The Music Center** is accessible directly from the freeway and houses three theaters, including the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the Ahmanson Theater, and the Mark Taper Forum. Miraculously, the Center escaped serious damage from the earthquake, and city officials have booked a yearlong series of concerts, plays and operas showcasing local talent as a means of boosting local spirits.

• **The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)** is located in the same complex that also houses the La Brea Tar Pits (a source of considerable curiosity for local Devourers) and the George C. Page Museum. LACMA is home to an international collection of art, from prehistoric to modern. Permanent exhibits include: Far Eastern art; American and European paintings, furniture and furnishings; sculpture and decorative art, including Greek, Roman and Assyrian specimens as well as a large textile and costume exhibit.

The Robert O. Anderson Gallery offers 20th-century painting and sculpture, as well as special exhibits on loan. The Pavilion for Japanese Art, an interesting building with an interior circular ramp, was built for the famous Shin'enkan paintings and also contains a large *netsuke* collection. The pavilion's white window panels are designed to permit only natural light, as in traditional Japanese homes, and an interior tiered fountain controls the humidity.

• **The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)** offers equal time to modern art from 1940 to the present. MOCA displays paintings, sculptures, environmental pieces and mixed media, as well as performing arts programs reflecting the interactive "multimedia" art of today. The building, designed by Arata Isozaki, is considered by some to be itself a work of modern art. MOCA has an auxiliary facility, titled "Temporary Contemporary," located in Little Tokyo.

• **The George C. Page Museum of La Brea Discoveries** exhibits reconstructed fossils of various Ice Age animals found in the tar pits between the LA County Museum of Art and the Pavilion for Japanese Art. The Rancho La Brea Tar Pits have proven to be a rich source of information on the Ice Age — the deposits of thick tar date from prehistoric times, and over the years thousands of animals have become trapped in the sticky sludge and died, their bones perfectly preserved. The liquid asphalt has slowly given up its treasures, and continuing excavation can be viewed at several locations, including an observation pit. La Brea still bubbles up relics from the ancient past — who knows what may eventually surface from its unplumbed depths?

• **City Hall** is one of the only buildings whose renovations have actually been completed, and no one is foolish enough to ask why. The architecture is geometric and open, intended to reflect a society of the future, leading back to a maze of hallways and doors. The mayor and councilmen all have their official offices here as do

many of the city's departments (Sanitation, health service, welfare, etc.), but the Devil's Night earthquake all but destroyed the building. Trey Daniels (see Chapter Three, page 50) still comes here ostensibly to oversee the rebuilding and to keep the mayor informed.

SOUTH CENTRAL

South Central is the famous "hood" of music and movies. A predominately African-American population lives in an area of increasing poverty and decreasing opportunity. Some say the city council built the Staples center so that white inhabitants would no longer have to drive into South Central to see the Lakers or the Kings play in the Forum. For reasons that baffle local seismologists, South Central was the epicenter of the Devil's Night quake, causing tremendous devastation that was further exacerbated by waves of rioters and vandals. There is very little left standing in South Central, making it a surreal landscape of ruined houses ringed by torn chain link fences and abandoned cars.

• **The Empire Market** is the site of the other tragedy which inflamed the inhabitants of South Central in 1992. Here a Korean woman who owned the market shot and killed a fifteen year old black girl, claiming self defense, though the girl was shot in the back of the head while she was trying to exit the store. The woman was convicted of voluntary manslaughter, but a white judge sentenced her to only probation. During both the '92 riot and the Devil's Night riots, a gang of black youths defended the market from all would-be looters in order to keep Empire Market intact as a monument to the injustice blacks must endure in a white judicial system. The leader of these defenders was a man called Trip-9 (see page Chapter Three, page 87)

• **Nickerson Gardens** looms at the border of Watts near the Century Freeway and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital/Drew Medical Center. It is the largest government housing project in the western United States, and is 60/40 black and Hispanic respectively. With a limited number of entrances and winding streets the Nickerson Gardens are difficult for strangers to navigate. The problem is further exacerbated by the Eight Trey Gangster Crips' habit of removing street signs, the better to confuse rookie cops. There is an active war between the gangs and the cops here and the rattle of automatic weapons is a common sound there day or night. There is no structural damage in the Gardens because most of the arsonists running free on Devil's Night originated from there and had no interest in damaging their own homes. Psycho (see Chapter Three, page 88) is a prime mover amongst the Eight Trey gang.

• **Hollywood Park**, located in Inglewood, is one of the oldest racetracks on the West Coast. Like many of the other tracks in LA, Hollywood Park offers races

both day and night. Lately the track has become a favored spot for a pair of enterprising Devourers who use their ability to control animals to influence a number of races for their own monetary gain.

• **The Great Western Forum** is a Roman-inspired sports and entertainment complex and the home of the Los Angeles Lakers (basketball), the Kings (hockey) and the Strings (tennis), and hosts many concerts and boxing events. The Forum suffered from fire damage and minor vandalism during the riots, but the worst has been speedily repaired.

• **University of Southern California (USC)** is a private institution across from Exposition Park and one of the oldest private universities in the West. Built on 150 acres, USC is home to almost 30,000 students a year. Widney Alumni House was the first building on campus and is the second-oldest school structure in California. The McDonald's Swim Stadium housed the 1984 Olympics swimming and diving events. Near the center of campus, in Founders Park, is a 400-pound boulder quarried before 1200 B.C. from ancient Troy — it comes then as no surprise that the school teams are named "the Trojans." Arnold Schoenberg Institute houses the complete archives and library of the great 20th-century composer. The Bing Theater offers theatrical productions year-round.

Unlike UCLA, the University of Southern California escaped the earthquake and riots relatively unscathed, a fate that surprises the school administration and local authorities.

EXPOSITION PARK

Located across Exposition Boulevard from the USC campus, the area was originally known as "Agricultural Park," and was developed for annual horse races. The longest bar in the city was built beneath the track's grandstand, serving an ocean of beer to race enthusiasts and gamblers. When gambling was outlawed and horse racing's popularity declined the park was renovated by the city government and turned into a civic, cultural and recreational center. The park includes a seven-acre sunken rose garden that is a popular site for private, outdoor weddings, as well as the following points of interest:

• **The California Afro-American Museum** houses a permanent fine arts and history collection including paintings, photos, films and artifacts detailing African-American life.

• **The California Museum of Science and Industry** offers hands-on exhibits about all aspects of science, including math, computers, medicine and space technology. The museum also includes an Aerospace Hall and an IMAX theater.

• **The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County** contains detailed habitats from around the world, including a large dinosaur/prehistoric fossil dis-



play, a mineral collection, a cut-gemstone collection and the skeletal remains of a Megamouth, supposedly the world's rarest shark. There are also history galleries showing life in California and the Southwest from 1540 to 1490, as well as pre-Columbian archaeology.

• **Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena** is an indoor sports and entertainment facility that is home to the Los Angeles Clippers and the USC Trojans basketball teams. Other events hosted here include concerts, a circus, ice shows and trade expos.

• **Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum** is a famous outdoor sports arena that hosts the Los Angeles Raiders and the USC Trojans football teams. Built for the 1932 Olympics, it was the site of many track and field events of the 1984 Olympics, as well as the opening and closing ceremonies.

EAST LA

East LA, or "The Barrios," is almost exclusively Hispanic and one of the poorest sections of the city. About half the population are illegal immigrants who work for their relatives or in local sweatshops. One of the most powerful gangs in California makes its home in the area, the Nuestra Familia (Our Family). Their influence extends across the state and across the border into Mexico, and many of the illegal drugs found in LA come through on Nuestra Familia couriers.

• **El Mercado** is a bustling marketplace of street vendors, wandering mariachis, and inexpensive clothing. Like the Flea Market in Pasadena, El Mercado holds out tantalizing possibilities of finding treasure among piles of assorted junk. The glassblower Manuel Garcia (see Chapter Three, page 63) plies his trade here, selling his wares and accepting commissions from mortals and fallen alike.

• **Santa Anita** is one of the most famous Thoroughbred horserace tracks in the U.S., and was built in Arcadia in 1934. The track pioneered such racing advances as the magnetically-controlled starting gate and the photo finish.

• **Los Angeles State and County Arboretum**, also located in Arcadia, includes approximately 130 acres of botanical life, arranged by continent. It also boasts a horticultural research center, a reference library and a bird sanctuary. Other attractions include the Queen Anne Cottage and coach barn, the Hugo Reid Adobe, the Santa Fe Railroad depot and walking trails through a subtropical jungle. Local police are baffled by a string of especially grisly murders that have occurred in the Arboretum after hours. The first victims were local gang members who were apparently trespassing on the property, but recent discoveries of a prominent Beverly Hills socialite and a middle-class banker from Anaheim now have police suspecting that the killer is bringing the victims to the arboretum and killing them there to fulfill some sort of psychological obsession. Neither City Hall

nor LAPD will confirm rumors that significant quantities of blood and tissue were missing from the bodies, nor the discovery of what appears to be a new breed of rose growing in profusion near each victim.

• **Mission San Gabriel Archangel** was founded September 8, 1871, and was the first mission built in the Los Angeles area. Currently undergoing a new round of renovations (the mission was extensively damaged in the 1987 Northridge quake) in the wake of the Devil's Night earthquake, the building and grounds emanate a powerful aura of faith, leading a number of Cryptics and other fallen to speculate that there may be a holy relic of great power hidden somewhere in the old building.

• **The Hollow Cube** is found by going down a back alley off Washington Boulevard where it crosses Greenwood and looking for the bouncer. Going down the steps into the basement of an abandoned strip mall, you find yourself in a single, open room with chains of varying lengths dangling from the ceiling. Conversation is impossible unless the participants can read lips. The music tends towards alt-rock with powerful beats, the DJ is competent and the drinks are cheap. However the main attraction comes after midnight when the center of the packed room is cleared so that Bric-et-Brac (see Chapter Three, page 81) can dance for the audience.

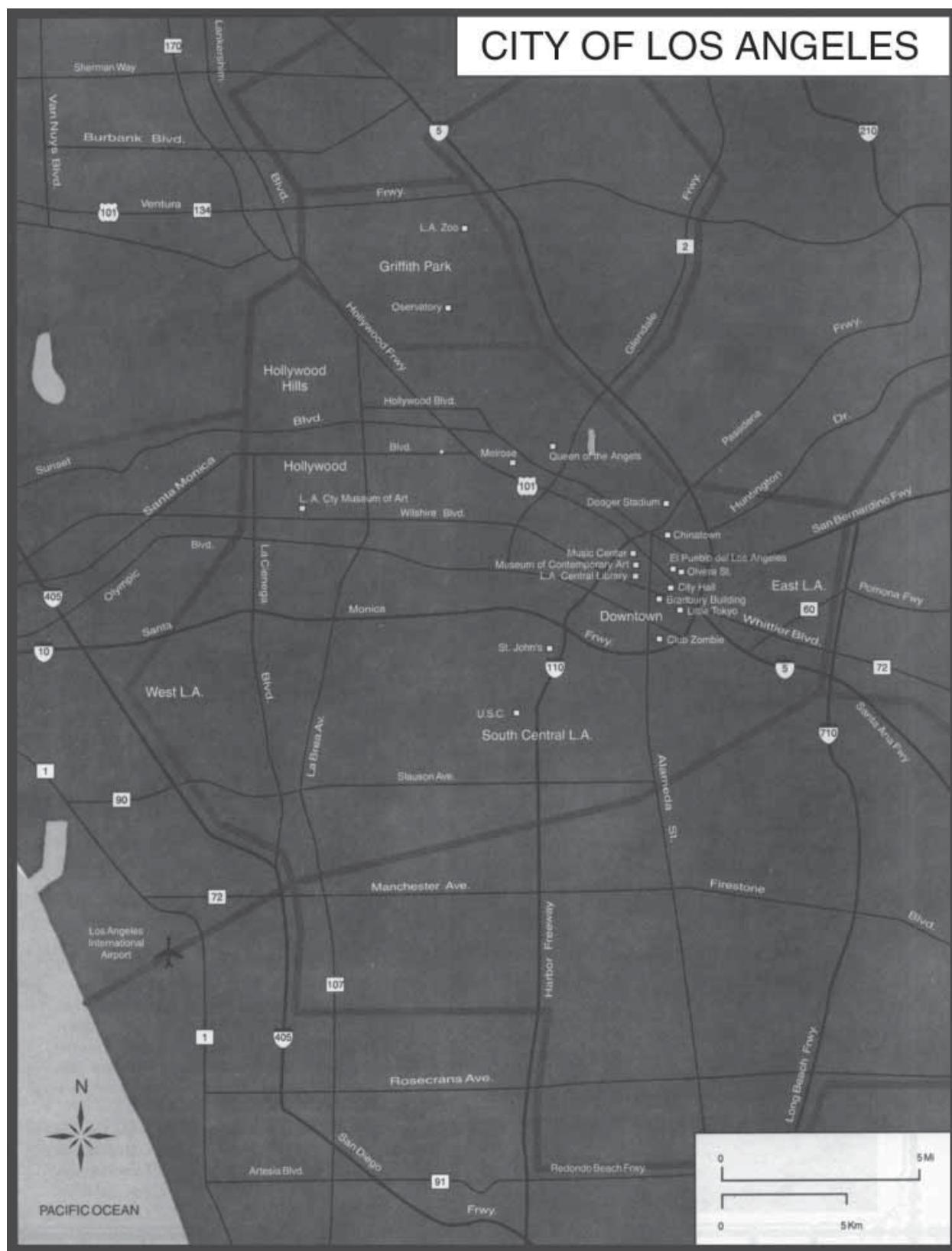
SOCIETAL PRESSURES

La-La Land is a culture of the surface. If it looks pretty then it must be wonderful, and people only speak foreign languages to show off. Surgical enhancements are expected, and as common for men as they are women. If something is not beautiful, then ignore it until it goes away.

But it has not been going away. In fact it has been getting steadily worse. Crime is up. The murder rate is up. Theft is up. Rape is up. Most of the city has been burned or shaken down twice within the past ten years. Corruption in every level of the local government has been publicly proven so many times that most Angelinos do not even notice another scandal is upon them until a day or two after the fact.

This societal myopia has recently been knocked on its ear by the frenzy of religious mania sweeping the inhabitants of the City of Angels in the wake of the Devil's Night riots. Churches have become standing room-only areas, and the primary focus of neighborhood life. Catholicism remains the largest religious organization in the Tri-County area. With its many ceremonies and ancient rites, this faith is attracting a broader spectrum of worshipers than in the past. The Protestant religions are not faring so well, but still boast their largest attendance numbers ever.

More esoteric beliefs have also netted greater notice, including the ancient practice of Taoist sorcery, and bookstores are having difficulty keeping the I-Ching in



stock. In a valley where Feng Shui was an established fad for business and the wealthy, it should come as no surprise that these rituals, some of which date back over three thousand years, have found a new relevance.

What alarms those people who are paying attention is the number of cults that have arisen in a short time. Several are just cynical attempts to manipulate the young and insecure into providing money and sex, but a couple are elegantly constructed, persuasive and dangerous cults which lead otherwise decent people down paths of madness and murder.

Most notable of these cults is Michael Gutenov's (see Chapter Three, page 87). Gutenov claims that it was God manifesting in the skies over LA as a signal that the end times were upon the earth, the Rapture spoken of in Revelations. He calls his collection of teenage Goths the Harvesters. They have taken to the streets at night in a van in groups of five to pick up those people who seem holy, and then in a secret basement beneath the Museum of Death sending them on to be with God. Of course, these devotees must be purified first. And everybody knows that fire is the best way to purify. The police, who are spread so thin that many officers have passed out from exhaustion, have been slow to notice these disappearances because the Harvesters mostly gather up the homeless.

More distressing than the Harvesters has been a rash of child disappearances across the city. One response to this disturbing phenomenon is a movement among the wealthy that claims that the manifestation on Devil's Night was a warning of the impending destruction of the city. For this reason many wealthy families have sent their children to a camp in the San Bernardino Mountains in the east run by Tanya de Rossi (see Chapter Three, page 50).

On the streets once-amoral gangshave suddenly adopted a vigilante bent, attacking evil wherever they see it — and they are seeing it everywhere. Some of this is disingenuous self-servitude, but a surprising majority of it is the real thing. The famous tags that marked the borders of different and rival gangs have become a method of conveying warnings and information to each other as these youths find themselves fighting not for survival but what they believe to be forces of evil hiding in their very midst.

Even the nature of the city's graffiti has also undergone a dramatic change. Previously the wall art of the city were often elaborate portraits and cunningly crafted mosaics of a political nature. Now matters of the spirit are commonplace, which is hardly surprising, but what is unusual is the words woven through some of these wall-paintings. It is in a language no scholar can recognize, but many are flocking from all over the world to study. The signature on these pieces of graffiti identifies the artist as someone called One-Eye (see Chapter Three, page 69).

By far the most serious problem currently facing the Los Angeles community, and the city government in particular, is the huge influx of people who have flocked to the City of Angels in the wake of Lucifer's appearance. California is no stranger to religious leaders and their sometimes off-the-wall teachings, but the events of Devil's Night have drawn people seeking divine inspiration by the hundreds to a city teetering on the brink of collapse. Priests, mystics and madmen preach their creed on every street corner downtown, and local parks are clogged with squatter camps of destitute souls, sometimes entire families, who left behind their worldly belongings to come seek the angel. There have already been numerous incidents of assault, murder, kidnapping and theft among this transient populace, and the city leaders are for the moment powerless to drive these religious zealots away.

ECONOMY

Originally Los Angeles was an agrarian economy which gave way to an industrial economy early in the twentieth century. World War II was a boom time for LA as many aeronautic companies built their factories in the Tri-County effort to make use of the easy port and railway access.

However this business boom was the death knell of the farmer. The city paved over the orchards to build subdivisions and freeways. Nobody noticed or even cared as the land of many smokes became the land of much smog because everybody was working. Well, most people were. Well, all the important people were.

While this was happening the movie studio system had grown to maturity, and Hollywood was mass producing entertainment for the masses. This was a great boon for LA, not because the movies brought money to the city, but because the glamour of Hollywood was being reported around the world, and this opened the doors of the city to hordes of curious tourists.

Tourism remains the steadiest source of income for LA even today. Millions flock to the city every year in an effort to catch a glimpse of celebrities and to tour studios that no longer even pretend to make movies.

Oddly enough the movie business is beginning to cause financial problems for the city in a very subtle way. Movies make millions of dollars for a studio and create an image of prosperity and glamour, but the actual bulk of the money is controlled by a relatively small number of people. Other wealthy individuals come to LA drawn to the smell of fellow sybarites.

Shops serving these excessively rich raise their prices both because they can and because the rich hate to buy inexpensive things. Why have too much money if you can't spend it frivolously? These higher prices are seen as further proof of the wealth of the city. So you

GOVERNMENT

The mayor, the fifteen-person city council and the five-member board which oversees the county are elected to four-year terms, as are the many other elected officials, both city and county. In this, the political system of Los Angeles is simple and fairly straightforward, but this does not make local politics any less complex or problematic. Foremost among the problems local government faces is the police force, whose autonomy has been a constant thorn in the side of the civilian government. After both the Watts and '92 Riots, experts confidently predicted major shakeups in the organization of the LAPD, but so far, no major changes have occurred. The positive side of this, for the fallen at any rate, is that the police remain understaffed because neither the city council nor the mayor will supply them with any money, so the fallen are able to act with a freer hand than in any other city in the US.

Ironically, the government agency the fallen most frequently run afoul of is the Welfare Bureau, which operates a roaming strategy so that they can intervene with dangerously unstable households. Often a demon awakens in a host body and during a period of acclimation attracts the attention of the Social Services. One waggish Cryptic has suggested that the Almighty permitted the fallen to escape from the Abyss because Earth had become worse than the Pit, and she pointed to the human legal system as proof positive.

Overall, Devil's Night has crippled the Los Angeles government. City Hall was reduced to rubble, and the Parker Center, housing the main headquarters for the LAPD, was also destroyed. The massive earthquake did enough damage to cripple these two buildings long enough for the rioters to move in and finish the job. Making matters worse, the rioters managed to destroy several of the relay towers that served the mobile phone services, creating haphazard dead zones throughout the city.

Not even the city's fire department escaped the fury of Devil's Night. In the past the fire department has always been regarded with respect and above the suspicion leveled at the police, but lately that has changed. During the Riots of '92, one fireman was shot while driving an engine en route to a fire, and gangs of blacks wielding automatic weapons chased several firefighters away from burning buildings. Devil's Night took an even harder toll on the firefighters, who lost twelve of their men when a gang, again wielding automatic rifles, executed two squads of firefighters and the police guard they had with them. This has had a chilling effect on retention of retirement-age firefighters and the recruitment of their replacements, leading to severe shortfalls in emergency response staffing citywide.

have a city of several million inhabitants and there are billions of dollars lying around. The obvious conclusion is that everybody is well off.

But this wealth is controlled by only five percent of the population. Fully a third of the population are so far below the median as to almost be considered a Third World economy. However when the city council applies to the government, or anyone else for that matter, for financial aide, those sources point at the enormous wealth held *within* the city and fail to appreciate that the wealth is not held *by* the city. LA has become a victim of its own good press.

Exacerbating this illusion of wealth is the banking. LA is something of a financial center in terms of international banking and financial speculations. Michael Milken, the junk-bond king who stole billions of dollars from old-age pensioners and blue collar workers, was based out of LA, and the two main senators implicated in the charges were both Democrats from southern California.

Milken may have been found out and sent to a federal prison, but others of his ilk still ply their trade in the balmy weather of the Tri-County Area. Again, though, this is money held by the private sector, not the government, and through clever or questionable account much of this wealth is not even taxed.

None of this was an insurmountable problem so long as the factories remained open, because the factories were responsible, directly and indirectly, for almost forty percent of the blue collar labor to be found in the Tri-County Area. There was the actual factory work, then the transportation to and from, then the support jobs like restaurants, clothing outlets and so forth. This system still left huge numbers of people out of work, but at least they had the illusion of being able to get work some day.

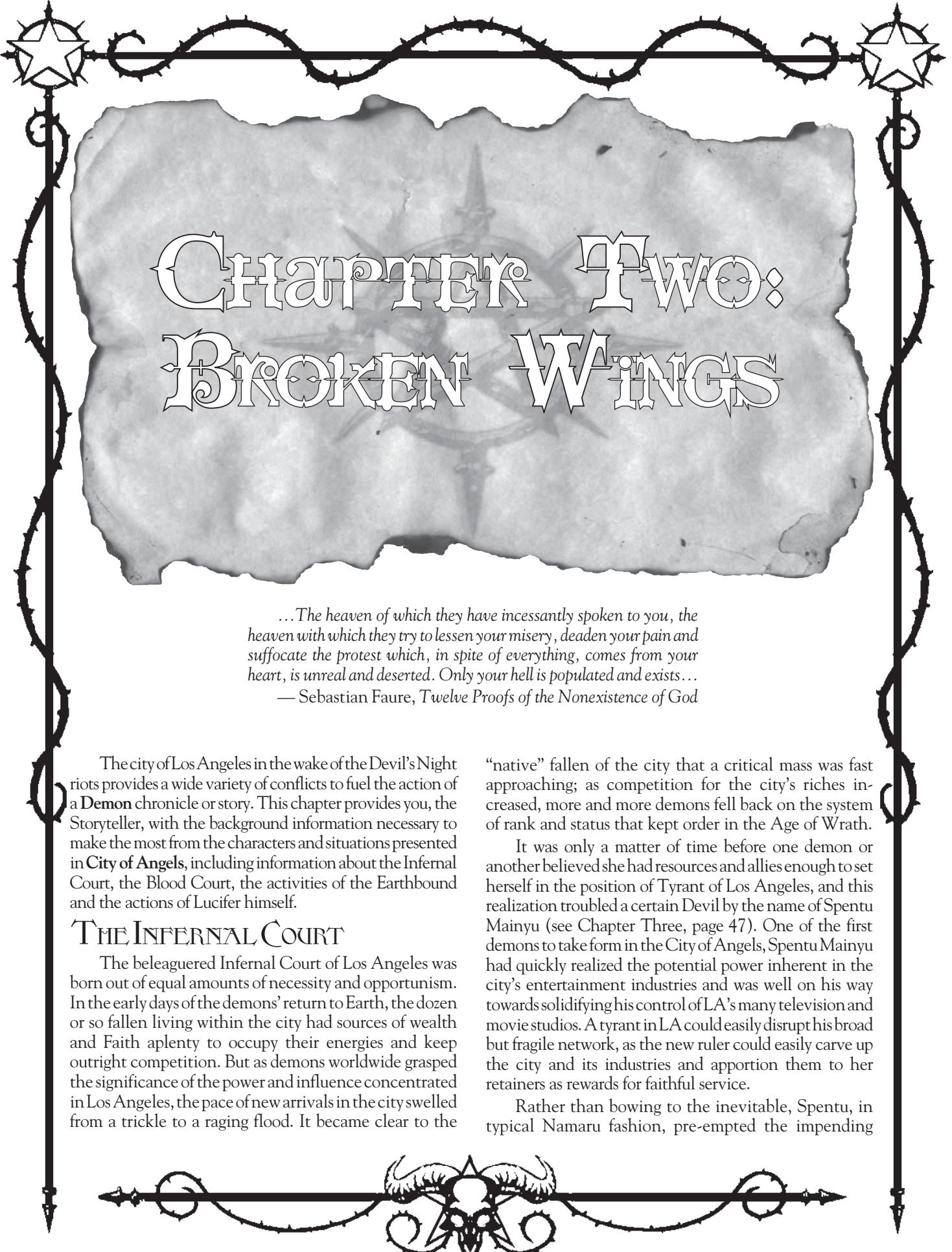
Then came the military cuts of the late 20th century. All of those aeronautical factories closed. Practically overnight the unemployment rate tripled, but the population continued to grow, because on paper, LA looked like a wealthy city.

The surface was beautiful to behold.

An excellent example of how this illusory wealth hurt LA is found in the police force. The LAPD is one third smaller than any other city with a comparable population level because the city does not have enough money to hire more officers. Police chiefs have been trying since the twenties to get more officers, but to no avail. This dearth of police officers meant that when the riots struck, all three riots (Watts, '92, and Devil's Night), there were not enough officers on the payroll to put a stop to them.

Some experts have suggested that as horrible as the Devil's Night earthquake and riots were, the worst is still to come.





CHAPTER TWO: BROKEN WINGS

...The heaven of which they have incessantly spoken to you, the heaven with which they try to lessen your misery, deaden your pain and suffocate the protest which, in spite of everything, comes from your heart, is unreal and deserted. Only your hell is populated and exists...

— Sebastian Faure, *Twelve Proofs of the Nonexistence of God*

The city of Los Angeles in the wake of the Devil's Night riots provides a wide variety of conflicts to fuel the action of a Demon chronicle or story. This chapter provides you, the Storyteller, with the background information necessary to make the most from the characters and situations presented in **City of Angels**, including information about the Infernal Court, the Blood Court, the activities of the Earthbound and the actions of Lucifer himself.

THE INFERNAL COURT

The beleaguered Infernal Court of Los Angeles was born out of equal amounts of necessity and opportunism. In the early days of the demons' return to Earth, the dozen or so fallen living within the city had sources of wealth and Faith aplenty to occupy their energies and keep outright competition. But as demons worldwide grasped the significance of the power and influence concentrated in Los Angeles, the pace of new arrivals in the city swelled from a trickle to a raging flood. It became clear to the

"native" fallen of the city that a critical mass was fast approaching; as competition for the city's riches increased, more and more demons fell back on the system of rank and status that kept order in the Age of Wrath.

It was only a matter of time before one demon or another believed she had resources and allies enough to set herself in the position of Tyrant of Los Angeles, and this realization troubled a certain Devil by the name of Spentu Mainyu (see Chapter Three, page 47). One of the first demons to take form in the City of Angels, Spentu Mainyu had quickly realized the potential power inherent in the city's entertainment industries and was well on his way towards solidifying his control of LA's many television and movie studios. A tyrant in LA could easily disrupt his broad but fragile network, as the new ruler could easily carve up the city and its industries and apportion them to her retainers as rewards for faithful service.

Rather than bowing to the inevitable, Spentu, in typical Namaru fashion, pre-empted the impending

ALL ROADS LEAD TO LA

What if you've already established your chronicle in another city and want to shift the action to Los Angeles? Given LA's unique position as entertainment capitol of the world, this should be fairly easy to do. Simply have the characters watch a news show. Lucifer's manifestation will be receiving *worldwide* coverage in every form of media, so even if your chronicle is set in the outback of Australia, the characters will eventually hear of what has happened, and every demon (or her overlord) should be at least somewhat curious about the Morningstar's fate. The characters can travel to the city to investigate Lucifer's appearance, to seek revenge, to resume the struggle against Heaven by the side of their lost Prince or simply to seize a kingdom for their own.

All thoughts of Lucifer aside, Los Angeles is also a major shipping artery for the western United States. Trains, planes, boats and automobiles all travel through here headed for local and international destinations. With all this traffic who knows what strange or mysterious items or individuals pass through the Tri-County Area? Treasures, artifacts, books and people are all possibilities. Perhaps the one or more of the characters are searching for lost comrades or lovers, or are hot on the trail of a relic rumored to rest somewhere in the Hollywood hills? While in the city the characters will inevitably cross paths with one or both of the infernal courts operating in the city, providing you with ample opportunity to involve them in the city's explosive politics.

Then there is the entertainment industry. Entertainment has replaced religion as the opiate of the masses, and a clever demon who could control the entertainment industry has the power to harness the minds of millions. Conversely, characters may be drawn to Los Angeles to expressly prevent such a catastrophe from occurring. Can they keep the movie and television studios free from infernal influence, or do they dare use them for themselves (for the good of mankind, of course)?

problem of succession by gathering his own allies and seizing control of the city for himself. Spentu Mainyu re-established four of the five court Ministries (Eagle, Auroch, Lion and Dust), but carefully left the inquisitorial Ministry of Dragons vacant. Without a higher court to impose their will on the city's tyrant, Spentu carefully and methodically arranged his ministers in such a way that a dynamic tension of loyalty and rivalry ensured that the court's influence was more theory than practice. This left the Devil with enough law and order

to enforce order on the city's demon population while still allowing him the freedom he required to continue his own ambitious pursuits. What Spentu Mainyu didn't count on was the enormous amount of time and energy required to run even a notional infernal court and maintain enough of a semblance of order to keep the court's subjects under control. Spentu found himself struggling to master the two demanding and time-consuming tasks and succeeding at neither. The situation might have eventually spun completely out of control if not for the unexpected arrival of Lady Kishar.

Kishar had been a famous hero of the Iron Legion. Her seniority of rank, which she had earned before the Fall meant that by rights the city was hers to rule, if not necessarily in fact. The new demon was a fierce Luciferan and something of an oddity amongst the politically cunning fallen who had arrived in LA. She was brutally straightforward and conscientious in her duties, expecting total obedience from her subjects and enforcing the laws of her domain scrupulously and fairly. In many ways her disingenuousness made her the worst possible demon to rule Los Angeles, but she was perfect for the Devil's purposes.

When Kishar arrived, many of the city's demons waited with bated breath for a confrontation between Kishar and Spentu Mainyu, but the anticipated duel never came. Unexpectedly Spentu Mainyu retired his rank and leadership, a move unheard for any demon, much less a fallen of the First House, and declared Kishar the lawful Tyrant and Baroness of Los Angeles. Kishar was so moved by this display of fealty that she elevated the Devil to the rank of lord and granted him the title Lord Inquisitor of the vacant Dragon Ministry, a position that granted Spentu Mainyu a great deal of influence within and without the court.

Spentu Mainyu's Senior Ministers retained their positions under the new tyrant:

The Ministry of Eagles is run by Lord Chenrezig (see Chapter Three, page 67), whose Cryptic leanings remain a source of much tension between him and Spentu Mainyu. Chenrezig's human guise as a transient allows him access to broad spectrum of information, and the Lidless Eye takes his duties seriously. He hoards his information like a miser, and appears to be completely apolitical. Chenrezig is secretly a member of the Cryptic delegation under Al-Lat's (see Chapter Three, page 60) command, although he arrived several months before the others.

Lord Aglibol (Chapter Three, page 49), a staunch Luciferan, controls the Ministry of the Auroch. In his capacity as guardian of the Infernal Court, Aglibol has secured a number of sites around the Tri-County Area for any fallen to use if they need to avoid mortal eyes for a short period of time. Diligently fulfilling his role as judge for the court, Aglibol's rulings are stern but fair, hewing

closely to conservative rulings rather than applying his own interpretations of the law. A clever schemer Aglibol has allowed his intense hatred for Vohu Mano, Senior Minister of the Ministry of Dust to blind him to the political machinations of Spentu Mainyu.

A Reconciler sits at the head of the Ministry of Dust. Vohu Mano (see Chapter Three, page 72) awoke inside the body of a gay rights activist named Jonathon Freeman and has found his once cruel nature tempered by Freeman's passion to change the world. Using Jonathon's extensive political contacts Vohu Mano is ideally suited for the Ministry of Dust and keeps a close eye on the mortal world for the court.

The Fiery Sword of the Ministry of Lions is a relative newcomer to the city, a Fell Knight named Guanli (see Chapter Three, page 61). A fallen from the East Coast who arrived as a part of a Cryptic expedition to LA, Guanli reluctantly accepted the Ministry from Spentu Mainyu under the direct orders of the expedition's commander, Lady Al-Lat. Since Guanli assumed the title of Fiery Sword the Ministry of Lions has been kept remarkably inactive, particularly in a city that boasts a rival fallen court and the activities of no less than three Earthbound. When the Baroness makes a direct request of the Ministry, Guanli musters his troops and acts quickly and decisively (and once he is engaged, Guanli always gives his all), but without

prompting from the city's tyrant the Cryptic prefers to keep to himself and his workshop.

Spentu Mainyu bowed to the Baroness in hopes that his act of humility would earn him favor in her eyes and possibly the head of the Dragon Ministry, which he had deliberately kept open so as to avoid having a Censor active while he ruled. He was correct on both counts.

By relinquishing the court to Kishar, the Devil succeeded in ridding himself of the day-to-day distractions of running the court while still possessing great influence over its ministers. Further, his own ascension to the head of the Dragon Ministry ensured that there would be no court Censor to monitor and investigate his activities. Many fallen would have stopped there, content with their situation, but Spentu Mainyu went a step further. The wily Devil believed that a new level of conflict was needed to occupy Kishar's attention and the court's energies, so he made secret overtures to Lady Anat (see Chapter Three, page 66) and persuaded her to form her own court. And as a reward for his support, Anat named Spentu Mainyu as head of the Dragon Ministry for her court as well, a post he accepted with a great show of humility.

THE BLOOD COURT

Using Spentu Mainyu's knowledge of the city's fallen inhabitants, Anat quickly and quietly set about



appointing ministers to her Blood Court. First, to head the all-important Eagle Ministry, Spentu Mainyu introduced Anat to the Lady Nasu (see Chapter Three, page 87), who also serves Chenrezig's Ministry as Deputy Minister. The meeting was favorable and the Blood Court acquired a Lidless Eye for its Eagle Ministry.

The next recruit was the Lady Inana (see Chapter Three, page 74). Although she had never declared for a faction, Spentu Mainyu learned that she was a Ravener, and armed with this knowledge he recruited her to head up the Blood Court's Ministry of Aurochs. Inana is everything one might expect from a high-Torment Devourer; she is breathtakingly beautiful, utterly sociopathic, and cruel beyond words.

Anat did not want to establish a Ministry of Dust because she considered humanity to be beneath her notice, but Nasu convinced the Lady of the need for such an office by demonstrating how some people could be manipulated to exterminate their fellow man. Nasu took Anat to the Museum of Death one night and introduced her to Michael Weintraub who willingly became Nasu's thrall. Using Michael as a cat's paw, Anat created a cult that tortured and murdered at the slightest command.

Convinced of humanity's potential, Anat asked Spentu Mainyu to suggest a suitable leader for the Ministry of Dust. Spentu Mainyu recommended Lord Vritran (see Chapter Three, page 55), a high-Torment Devil who more closely matched the Ravener's credo than the Luciferean one he spouted.

Spentu Mainyu was one appointment away from having created two Courts in one city when Anat did something unexpected. She named Fell Knight Ravana to the post of Lord General of the Ministry of Lions. A newcomer, Ravana is a mystery to Spentu Mainyu. Something the scheming Devil is scrambling to rectify.

Complicating the situation further is the enigmatic Lady Al-Lat (see Chapter Three, page 60). She is the leader of a Cryptic expedition to Los Angeles to establish a foothold for the Cryptics in the city. Her followers are Guanli, Chenrezig and Nasu. It was upon Al-Lat's command that Guanli accepted the title of Fiery Sword. Al-Lat also insisted that her other lieutenants occupy the position of Lidless Eye for both courts. Through Chenrezig and Nasu, Al-Lat is fully aware of the double game which Spentu Mainyu is playing, but for now there is no benefit for her to expose him, and it gives her a trump card to play against the scheming Faustian should he ever turn his attentions on her.

The Blood Court has so far managed to avoid major repercussions from Baroness Kishar because the normally dutiful and diligent tyrant is currently preoccupied with a matter from the ancient past. Her lover, Ahsur (see Chapter Three, page 79), has possessed the body of man named Jeffrey Black, but Jeff was already married

with three children. Further confusing the issue is Kishar's host, who was an elderly black woman. They make a strange sight when they are seen together, a frail old black woman holding hands with a young, white LA County Sheriff.

This romance is problematic not so much because of how odd it appears to human eyes, but because Ashur has renounced all politics and quietly supports the Reconciler faction. So even when the two lovers come together, they only frustrate each other with their inability to understand the other's position. Kishar cannot understand why her lover has changed his mind, and Ashur is stunned by the mercilessness of his lover. While the Baroness loses time fretting over her lost love, the Ministries of the Aurochs and Dust are effectively paralyzed by the feud between Aglibol and Vohu Mano.

The Ministry of Eagles accurately identified these problems long ago, but Chenrezig has not reported anything to his Baroness because Al-Lat wants the Court to remain weak and disorganized. A weak Court will facilitate a Cryptic coup later on when Al-Lat has secured a strong enough power base, so Chenrezig keeps his observations to himself.

Meanwhile the Blood Court benefits from being smaller and having a more unified philosophy (except for Spentu Mainyu, all are effectively Raveners), but it is not entirely devoid of tensions itself.

For the same reasons as Chenrezig, Nasu is not making full reports to Lady Anat. However the Eagle Ministry of the Blood Court is giving out more information than its counterpart in Kishar's court. Al-Lat seems to favor Anat over Kishar, however that may only be an effort by the Cryptic leader to keep the two courts on equal levels.

Although the Blood Court does not suffer from the same degree of diffidence and infighting the madness and cruelty of its members pose a different set of problems as is readily seen in Nasu's case. Her ties with the mortal Michael Weintraub and his Harvesters occupies most of her time, and her personality shows signs of dementia. As the Harvesters sacrifice more people to her she becomes crueler and her Torment grows.

Inana is undergoing a similar tribulation, albeit more subtly. She is not given to wanton murder, so her descent into monstrosity is slower and harder to detect. However every month she takes a new lover whom she subverts and breaks until he becomes her thrall. The steady stream of degradation she inflicts hardens her soul and increases her Torment.

While his contemporaries struggle with their Torment, Vritran's activities are focused elsewhere. For this head of the Ministry of Dust for the Blood Court is Spentu Mainyu's chiefly, and together the two intend to subvert the minds of mankind on a staggering scale. At the behest of his partner Vritran has dedicated his

time to gaining influence throughout the television networks, and has so far enjoyed considerable success.

From this power base the pair are attempting to subtly alter mankind's perceptions of the Almighty and his followers. They have managed to encourage an enormous increase in supernatural themes in television programs, so as to prepare the public with the eventual goal of producing programs that tell the true story, of how the fallen came to be.

These were the various dances performed by the lead characters of Los Angeles' political scene, each move and countermove planned and executed with subtlety and skill — until the fires of Devil's Night, and the appearance of the Morningstar.

The Luciferans (Kishar, Aglibol and Vritran) of Los Angeles celebrated. Their Lord and Master had returned to them. All their questions would be answered and their loyalty rewarded. But as quickly as he appeared, he vanished. Kishar and Vritran both decided, independently of each other, that this brief revelation meant Lucifer approved of their actions, but Aglibol found himself suddenly doubting where his loyalties lay.

Aglibol never doubted that his Prince would one day reveal himself, but Lucifer's subsequent disappearance troubled the demon greatly. Since the riots, the safe-houses Aglibol so carefully established are no longer being maintained, nor are the ones which were damaged or destroyed by the earthquake being restored. Indeed all of the Auroch Ministry's duties are being neglected while Aglibol struggles with his doubts.

Aglibol's crisis of faith also means that downtown Los Angeles, which is his demesne, is rebuilding itself free of the fallen's influence. Regaining this lost ground will prove a formidable task, and one which Aglibol is showing no signs of being able to carry out without some form of help.

The Cryptics are also finding themselves unable to make effective use of the chaos that Lucifer's manifestation caused. This is primarily because Al-Lat is losing control over Nasu and Guanli, so while the Lady Malefactor can see the opportunities presented her, she must spend her time trying to get her disobedient followers to obey her orders.

Meanwhile Hollywood spirals out of control just like its ruler, Nasu. As she spends more and more time with her Harvesters she neglects her duties as both mistress of a mortal domain and the court's Lidless Eye. Anat is so busy tending to her lover's needs that Nasu's negligence has so far gone unnoticed, but this cannot continue indefinitely.

Santa Monica, which Chenrezig controls, suffered greatly from the violence of the riots, but did not sustain much property damage, so the fallen Lord has encountered little difficulty overseeing the rebuilding of his territory.

Finally, although his domain (Beverly Hills) suffered little or no physical damage, the Faustian Spentu Mainyu is scrambling to restore his influence over the badly-damaged government infrastructure, creating gaps in his authority that outsiders can take advantage of.

THE EARTHBOUND

The terrible and enigmatic Earthbound are a potent threat to every demon in the City of Angels, and no less than three of these titans are currently pursuing their individual agendas in Los Angeles. If you want to use them as adversaries in your chronicle you can use the guidelines provided in the **Demon Storyteller's Companion** to determine their statistics and powers, though any one of these creatures are more than a match for any dozen newly-returned fallen. These characters work best as shadowy figures manipulating events through a network of thralls and enslaved fallen, avoiding direct conflict whenever possible.

BELIAL, THE GREAT BEAST

Belial is arguably the most powerful of the Earthbound, the Great Beast who was once Lucifer's champion and chief lieutenant in the war against heaven. Of all the fallen, Belial was perhaps the most affected by Lucifer's disappearance at the end of the war, and the aeons of torment that followed only deepened his sense of rejection and betrayal. Having forsaken Heaven for Lucifer's sake, having slain fellow angels in the war and then having been forsaken by Lucifer in turn churned Belial's spirit into a maelstrom of fury and self-loathing. Now the Great Beast hungers for nothing but destruction; he stalks after the Morningstar with fire and sword, turning Lucifer's every refuge into hell on earth. One day, so the Beast hopes, all the universe will burn, and the archangel will have nowhere left to hide. Then there will be a reckoning that will destroy them both.

Belial is even more of a solitary force than most Earthbound, operating with only a bare handful of thralls (whom he completely uses up and replaces as needed) and moving from place to place in search of the Morningstar. In practice, he is by turns brilliant and savage, often allying with other Earthbound to further his own purposes for as long as it suits him.

Not willing to lose his prey after coming so close, Belial struck a deal with Enshagkushanna. The latter needed access to certain aspects of Belial's power, and the Great Beast needed the other's mortal connection to locate Lucifer.

The pact is an uneasy one that either side will happily violate given the proper motivation, although Enshagkushanna wisely would be reluctant to incur Belial's wrath.

The Great Beast remains in the city, moving about only by night in search of any trace of his former Prince.



How long he will remain in the city is anyone's guess — likely until another rumor of Lucifer's whereabouts draws him elsewhere.

MANISHTUSU, THE LORD OF MURDER

Manishtusu, Lord of Murder, is a moderately powerful Earthbound infamous even among his peers for acts of violence and lunacy. His activities in the city are as mysterious and inscrutable as his reputation suggests, focusing on the gangs infesting LA's poorer neighborhoods and the religious organizations that minister to them. Rather than simply stepping in and subverting the most violent gangs directly, Manishtusu seems intent on forging a link between religion and gang activity; a bizarre combination of crime, brutality and sanctity. The ultimate goal of such a synthesis remains unclear, but progress was proceeding apace when Enshagkushanna's attempts to take the city by storm brought both Earthbound into direct conflict.

To date, Manishtusu's responses to his rival's overtures have been utterly maddening — in some cases the Earthbound gives up control of a gang without a struggle, in others he annihilates his rival's servants in a burst of surrealistic violence. In still other cases he simply kills individuals to prevent them from becoming objects of contention. If there is a master plan to Manishtusu's actions, only the Lord of Murder himself understands it.

Interestingly, it appears that Manishtusu was no more aware of Lucifer's presence in the city than his rival, but seemed to receive the news (from sources unknown) at roughly the same time as Enshagkushanna.

Before the Fall, Manishtusu had been close friends with the Fiend Chenrezig and though him learned that a mighty battle for the fate of all life would be fought in a valley shrouded in eternal smoke. When the fallen were cast into the Abyss and this battle had not occurred, Manishtusu understood that he would eventually be free again, so that when a human sorcerer summoned and bound the Lord of Murder into a sword Manishtusu was not surprised. He passed his time moving among the Mongol tribes of the Great Steppes until the age of explorers began. Then he worked his way west, until he contrived for Juan Cabrillo to find both himself and an artifact to assist the Portuguese explorer to find his way to California.

Once there, Manishtusu arranged for himself and the artifact to be removed from the ship and buried in different locations in what would become Los Angeles County. From that time on the Lord of Murder drifted in and out of sleep, waiting.

By the time of the twentieth century he decided that he had waited long enough. It was time to set the ground for this coming battle, the nature of which he does not know. Manishtusu's plan is to warp all of humanity. Simple destruction is not enough. He wants



to render the entire human race unusable to the fallen, strip them of all faith.

Manishtusu regrets choosing as he did, but cannot accept that. His hubris will not allow him to believe that he made a mistake in defying the Almighty, yet some inner voice cries out to him that he should be punished for his effrontery. Therefore he has devised a plan that will encompass both points of view. That his plan is madness does not bother him.

To this end Manishtusu's plans are to corrupt the very office of mankind's faith, the church. Given the proliferation of Catholicism in Los Angeles it is that august assembly which has attracted the Lord of Murder's attention.

The other tool Manishtusu plans to use is the numerous gangs of Los Angeles. His current focus is on the Eight Trey Gangster Crips, and his prize possession there is the fallen-possessed Trey-9 who is one of the leaders of the gang. Manishtusu plans to combine these disparate elements to forge a kind of paladin who can carry out the battle for which he has spent the past several millennia preparing.

With the emergence of the fallen from the Abyss, Manishtusu has set about acquiring servants from their number. His two prizes are the aforementioned Trey-9 and the priest Antonio Gabrelli. He has also seduced the Cryptic Nasu, and it is his influence which is accelerating her decline into torment and madness.

But the gem in his crown of converts has to be the pair of lovers Guanli and Ravana. For, as of the moment, no one is aware of their conversion. Although Manishtusu had not meant for the two to fall in love, he has not been slow to capitalize on the event.

Guanli encountered the Lord of Murder while he was searching for the artifact which was half of the Cryptic's objective in coming to Los Angeles, and the Malefactor fell under Manishtusu's sway as the Earthbound promised the fallen all the secrets he possessed concerning the manufacture of enchanted objects.

Ravana's host had been a serial killer before becoming a host for a Slayer, and her passion infected the fallen, making her a natural recruit for the Lord of Murder. She and Guanli met one day in the Nickerson Garden Project where Manishtusu keeps his reliquary, and the two fell to talking. Over the next couple of weeks the two met nightly, and soon fell in love with each other.

This means that Manishtusu effectively controls the Lion Ministry of both courts. So far he has mainly used them to attack Enshagkushanna, but refrains from overusing them so that their changed allegiance may remain unknown.

When Nasu informed the Lord of Murder that Lucifer was present in the City of Angels, he felt certain that the final battle had finally arrived, so he sent about trying to locate the First Rebel with no success.

Then came Devil's Night. The earthquake provided the Lord of Murder with an opportunity too rich to ignore, and he unleashed his minions in their fullest force. Over ninety percent of the murders and other violent crimes committed that night were committed by followers of Manishtusu.

So Lucifer's manifestation paralyzed Manishtusu. He had been preparing for this battle for so long he had difficulty recognizing the opportunity when it finally arrived. This paralysis partially explains why the riots died out so quickly.

Now, however, Manishtusu is ready. He will not be caught off guard again. He has reined in his most prized possessions: Guanli, Ravana and Antonio Gabrelli, but Nasu is slipping beyond his grasp. With every murder the Harvesters perform she slides further and further into Torment.

ENSHAGKUSHANNA

One of the lesser Earthbound and a vassal to Baal, an Earthbound of tremendous power, Enshagkushanna was the first of the reawakened to discover LA's enormous potential. By sheer chance one of the descendants Enshagkushanna "inherited" from his worshippers was a powerful movie and TV producer. The enthralled producer, no stranger to the politics of power-mongering, wasted no time promoting himself and his abilities to his new master, and Enshagkushanna quickly realized the opportunity before him. The Earthbound spent considerable resources to have his reliquary relocated from the bottom of the Indus River to a secret location on Catalina Island, and quickly formulated his plan for conquest.

Enshagkushanna's plan was simple. He knew he was a minor power among the Earthbound, but Los Angeles provided a rare opportunity for power and advancement. So Enshagkushanna intended to establish himself as the leader and then present the city to Baal in the hopes that his master would leave the City of Angels in his hands.

First the Earthbound, using his enthralled producer, cemented his influence throughout the television media, then set his sights on the movie studio system. At the same time Enshagkushanna developed a degree of influence in the LAPD and the County Sheriff's Department. In this he enjoyed considerable success, but found himself frequently running afoul of the Lord of Murder, so his plans moved more slowly than he might have hoped.

Enshagkushanna's crucial mistake was his failure to recognize the importance of Lady Anat's arrival in the city. He knew that Anat was once Baal's lover, but did not realize that they had since renewed their relationship. He believed the city was still unknown to Baal.

But the Archduke was well aware of the City of Angels. What he had not known was the

Enshagkushanna was already there, and that is why Baal sent his lover, Anat, to seize control of the city. Upon learning that Enshagkushanna was present Baal toyed with the idea of punishing him for trying to usurp the Archduke's power, but has since decided to leave Enshagkushanna in place to function as a kind of stalking horse, flushing potential threats into the open where they can be dealt with.

Then the rumors surfaced that Lucifer was in Los Angeles. Wasting no time, Baal contacted his vassal and demanded he find the Betrayer at once. The news stunned the beleaguered Earthbound, who by this time was deep in his struggles with both Manishtusu and the fallen.

In a blind panic, Enshagkushanna began pressing every advantage, using every favor, and employing every dirty trick he could think of to secure his power base and locate the First Rebel. This led to an increase of confrontations with the fallen, which in turn increased the tension of the inhabitants of Los Angeles. Although not as much with Manishtusu because the Lord of Murder operated on a different social level.

Then Lucifer manifested himself. Nobody was more stunned than Enshagkushanna, who had assumed that the Morningstar had long since been destroyed. Enshagkushanna saw his dreams of control over Los Angeles slipping away, but he was determined not to go down without a fight.

As Devil's Night exploded, Enshagkushanna ordered his people back to Catalina Island. There they watched Manishtusu and his minions run wild, and they waited, and they planned. As the fires burned themselves out, Enshagkushanna moved his people into place. All of the ground he had lost to the fallen and Manishtusu he regained with a couple of well-timed assassinations (he arranged for the deaths of several of his opponent's key thralls) and the creation of a cult to influence the rich of Beverly Hills.

The cult, armed with the growing religious hysteria which followed Lucifer's appearance and the story of the Passover from the Old Testament, moved into the gullible wealthy saying that another night of wrath was coming, and the only way to protect the firstborn was to send them away.

To this end Enshagkushanna created a camp in the San Bernardino Hills where the rich could send their children. Once they arrive they are drugged into a coma, and a demon is summoned from the Abyss to occupy their bodies. The children who return to their parents are no longer truly human.

Since the Devil's Night riots Enshagkushanna has changed his tactical thinking from short term to long term. He expects Baal to remove Los Angeles from his control, and is playing for time while the ranks of his

"children's army" grows. If he can gather enough power to wrest the city from the fallen he might yet gain control of the city.

LUCIFER, THE MORNINGSTAR, PRINCE OF THE FALLEN

Lucifer, leader of the rebellion against Heaven, was not destroyed by God, as many of the fallen believed, nor was he exiled to a separate Hell where the Creator could take personal interest in His torment. For reasons known only to the Almighty, Lucifer was, like his fellow rebels, stripped of much of his power and left to spend eternity wandering the earth.

For a time Lucifer could only watch helplessly as God's angels, like an occupying army, had their way with mankind. Some civilizations were spared while others were destroyed. The war was over but the suffering of mankind continued, to say nothing of the agonies that his followers now endured in the Abyss. Grief turned to outrage, then finally into bitter hate. There would be a reckoning, Lucifer vowed. For the sake of the fallen and humanity both, God would answer for what He had done. From that moment, Lucifer, bringer of light, became Shaitan, the great enemy of Heaven.

Drawing on his experience during the rebellion, Lucifer resumed his influence of mankind. He knew humanity's ability to innovate all too well, and if they had the right tools placed in their hands they could accomplish anything, including penetrating the Abyss. Over centuries he cultivated the practice of sorcery, and finally his patience was rewarded. Babylonian sorcerers pierced the darkness and summoned the first of Lucifer's five lieutenants back into the world. The five were the first of the Earthbound, and through them Lucifer intended to resume his efforts to direct humanity's evolution and free the rest of the fallen. But the archangel did not realize how terrible the suffering in the Abyss really was. By the time he had reached his compatriots they had been transformed by their torment into nightmarish beings. They still understood Lucifer's plan for harnessing mankind, but their vision for the future was something more terrible than even God could imagine. What was more, Lucifer's absence in the eternal prison was seen by many as the worst of betrayals. Where once he had been their glorious leader, now he was the Prince of Lies. When Lucifer tried to bring the Earthbound to follow his vision for humanity, they turned on him at once.

What followed was a long, running battle that has raged across history to the present day. While the numbers of the Earthbound swelled to 666, Lucifer fought a losing struggle to contain their influence worldwide, finally adopting the spiritual equivalent of a "scorched earth policy" by attacking spiritual institutions and

fostering rational thought over faith. The greatest feat the devil ever pulled was convincing mankind that he didn't exist — though for reasons that no human in his right mind would ever have believed.

Deprived of humanity's reservoir of faith, the Earthbound lost their followers and were eventually driven into hiding, leaving Lucifer equally stymied in an increasingly cold, technological world. It was a bitter kind of victory, and ultimately a fleeting one. Whether it was a subtle masterstroke by the Earthbound that took generations to bear fruit or a simple accident of fate — or even, perhaps, the will of a mysterious God — a maelstrom was unleashed across the spirit realm and the gates of the Abyss finally cracked open.

Now a host of demons have been unleashed upon an unsuspecting world, many almost as monstrous as the Earthbound, who sense their arrival and begin to stir from their ancient sanctums. To Lucifer, it appears that the death knell has been sounded for Earth and humankind. After thousands of years fighting the Earthbound, he is convinced that any demon issuing from the Abyss is irretrievably corrupt, and thus the tide has turned against him. But he will not simply surrender. He did so once, and all that brought him was centuries of pain. There will be a final battle, and one way or another the Earthbound will not see their vision fulfilled.

Since the 1930s Lucifer has lingered in Los Angeles, indirectly influencing the entertainment industry for much the same purposes that Spentu Mainyu hopes to do. When Belial's earthquake struck on Devil's Night and the riots began, Lucifer quickly realized what was happening, and sensed the hounds of the Earthbound searching for him through the city. He could have simply fled LA, but he'd been giving ground to the enemy for far too long. Instead, he decided to throw down the gauntlet. The Earthbound moved invisibly among the riots, fanning the flames and hunting their prey, but when they finally cornered Lucifer downtown, he did the unexpected. Instead of fighting or hiding, the archangel used all his reserves of power to reveal himself before the scores of rioters, police and reporters. For a few, brief moments Lucifer rose above the crowd in all his terrible glory, the image captured in people's minds and through the camera lens for the world to see. The Earthbound want humanity to forget about heaven or hell and surrender their souls without realizing it. Lucifer, in a single stroke, sent hundreds of people scrambling for their Bibles and struggling to remember what they'd learned about Armageddon as a child. Ultimately, his hope is to mobilize mankind to fight against the demons in their midst — a struggle he knows they are almost certain to lose, but it's better than the alternative.

Is Lucifer still in Los Angeles? If so, what is he up to now, in the wake of the riots? Ultimately, that's for you,

the Storyteller to decide. There are a number of possible options for you to choose from:

- Lucifer has left Los Angeles to regroup and begin his campaign against the Earthbound at a time and place of his choosing.

- Lucifer is still in the city and plans on taking direct action against the Earthbound, intending to defend Los Angeles and its mortal population in the most visible manner possible.

- Lucifer is still in the city and intends to defeat or drive out the Earthbound by opening humankind's eyes to the demons in their midst and stirring them to action.

- Lucifer is still in the city and intends to manipulate the fallen and the Earthbound into confronting and destroying one another.

- As an interesting twist, Lucifer expended all of his life energy when he revealed himself to the people of the world, and is now dead, leaving the fallen to once more take up his banner and save the world from the Earthbound.

Naturally, Lucifer works best as an enigmatic character whose influence is felt at crucial moments over the course of your chronicle, but rarely if ever takes a direct hand in your plot. If you want to create statistics and powers for the Morningstar, use the guidelines for the Earthbound provided in the **Demon Storytellers Companion**, with the notable exception that Lucifer has an effective Torment score of 1. He would be an extremely powerful adversary to face; despite having most of his power stripped from him, he is still the greatest of the angels, and is more than a match for nearly any Earthbound with the possible exception of Belial. If you want to give him a direct role in your chronicle, think his involvement through very carefully.

THE HOUSES

The following are some general ideas on generating plotlines using the various Houses present in Los Angeles. Again, these are only vague outlines to help kickstart your own creativity, not hard and fast concepts to graft onto your chronicle.

DEVILS

Los Angeles offers three major attractions to members of the First House: Lucifer, the media and money. While the fallen are acclimatizing themselves to this vastly changed world, the cunning Devils have not been slow to appreciate the importance of the media, particularly television. Almost every household in America has at least one, and a tool that reaches millions of people in a moment is of great interest to creatures who survive on faith.

More than any other House, the Devils felt the pain and confusion of Lucifer's absence in the Abyss. Now that he has so dramatically reappeared, many of the First House

are flocking to the city to be reunited with their lost Prince, though their motives are often wildly divergent.

Then there is the money. Money is power, and Devils love power. Los Angeles is a massive center for international banking on a par with New York or London. The cutthroat world of high finance draws many Devils like a moth to a flame; empires can be made or lost in a single day, and Devils often find themselves pitted against one another in the struggle for the big payoff.

Plot Ideas: How far will a Devil go to gain control over a thrall? Will he manufacture scenarios to make the human indebted to them, such as drugging a politician into unconsciousness and laying him in bed with a butchered prostitute so that the man awakens and thinks he has committed murder? If a Devil does this, which people helped him stage the crime (and butcher the whore), and are these assistants happy to be doing these terrible things? Might one of them talk? Viewed from another angle, how far would a Devil go to steal a potential thrall from a rival, or ruin one?

Money is power, so Devils like to control large amounts of the stuff. Money is normally regulated and tracked by accountants who are dry, timid people as a rule, but maybe there was an accountant who gambled and then embezzled to pay off his debts. How long could he mask his crime? What would a vengeful Devil do to someone who dared to steal from her? How would she track down this errant soul?

SCOURGES

Tragedies have a way of bringing out the best or worst in people, and the constant stream of disasters that have plagued Los Angeles has amplified this to an enormous degree. There are many people of compassion and many fearful souls to attract the attentions of escaping members of the Second House. Both kindness and hatred exist in equal measure in sunny Southern California, and so many Scourges have found a home here.

Lucifer's reappearance will change that to some degree though, because the Second House suffered when their leader did not join them in the Abyss, although not as keenly as the First House. Now that he has been found again, many will want to speak with him and learn what has happened in the interim.

For Storytellers, Scourges are great wild cards to throw into a mix, like Kishar. She sits outside of the normal political machinations of the fallen in the city, but her very presence is a constant variant that every scheming fallen must consider. Many make the mistake of thinking that a Scourge's loyalty is a form of naïveté, but nobody survives to make that mistake twice.

Plot Ideas: Since the Second House is notorious for its unswerving loyalty, what would happen if one of these Scourges returned to serve a master who has now

gone quite mad? Would loyalty hold the Scourge fast? Would she commit atrocities that repel her in the name of this loyalty? Or would she, could she, stand up and defy this master? What if her human host has changed her outlook on life, softened it?

In a similar vein, what would happen if a Scourge served a master who gave orders that ran contrary to Kishar's orders? Who would claim the higher service, her Lord or her Baroness? Might this unfortunate Scourge then become a spy in her Lord's camp relaying all she hears to the Baroness and hating herself for the duplicity?

MALEFACTORS

There are many Malefactors who find a home in Los Angeles, especially among the many craftsman who work in support of the movies and television, such as lighting technicians, lens-makers, armorers and the like.

A Malefactor's talent for creating tools makes them useful followers, but their temperamental natures render them less useful than they otherwise might be. Still many factions and the city's Earthbound would love to have a pet Malefactor creating weapons and other useful items for their side. Also a Malefactor might find herself drawn to the technical aspects of the entertainment industry, which would place her in an enviable position for demanding terms from other demons looking to make inroads into the industry.

Currently most of the Malefactors in Los Angeles are working for Al-Lat, who is the head of the Cryptics in the Tri-County Area, and she is searching hard for any other Malefactors who could be of use to her ongoing expedition. Because the Lidless Eyes of both courts report directly to Al-Lat, she is a logical first contact for visiting fallen.

Plot Ideas: Since most members of the Third House are primarily concerned with manufacture the most obvious plot choice would involve the sudden appearance of an artifact long thought lost. How far would a Malefactor go to acquire this artifact? What does the artifact do? Who made it? How many others are aware that it is here? How badly do these others want it? Is the rumor even true, or is somebody playing a double game to find out who else is looking? Maybe this schemer is trying to gather the competition into one location?

Because Malefactors are so interested in craftsmanship, they are more likely than any other House to be in oddest places for the oddest reasons. What might that Malefactor overhear or see while poking around in a place she doesn't necessarily belong? Could other demons be meeting there as well to discuss secret plans? What would the Malefactor do if she overheard or saw such things? Would she even understand the significance of what she saw or heard?

FIENDS

In spite of its well deserved reputation for shallowness, the Tri-County Area does boast of several universities such as UCLA, and although it is no haven for intellectuals like New York or Paris, the street corner spiritualists so common to the sunny streets of Los Angeles are also seekers of knowledge. This means that plenty of Fiends have found sympathetic hosts here, though overall they, along with the Defilers, are the least represented of the seven Houses.

The Fiends' talent for planning far into the future and clear-thinking makes them excellent villains for Storytellers, but their general lack of political ambition tends to relegate them to subservient and advisory roles, a fact heightened by the demons' predilection for hierarchies. Most of the Fiends in Los Angeles currently have been driven mad by their millennia of imprisonment in the Abyss, and so represent some of the worst of what the Fiends have to offer. Character groups who are playing heroic characters will find few allies in this group, or maybe a chance to try and redeem some of their fallen brothers and sisters. Chenrezig has not succumbed to this madness but his internal conflicts and fears are currently paralyzing him.

Plot Ideas: Plots for the Fourth House are fairly obvious given their proclivity for research and study. What piece of forgotten information might a Fiend stumble upon in an old book, maybe even one written in a foreign language? Or what long forgotten piece of writing paper might have been placed in an old book for a Fiend to accidentally stumble across? Once this mystery is suggested to the Fiend how will she track down the information?

Another idea centers on the limited prescience that certain Fiends possess. After all, what does a seer of the future dream of? Are these dreams actual glimpses of the future or just a future that might be? Are they visions of friends dead or desolate? Are they images of hated enemies standing victorious over these fallen friends? If these are the substance of the visions, can they be prevented? If so, how? Or are these visions of inexplicable things like a blooming rose which cries tears of blood or a wolf which dances under a blood red moon with a mighty sword in its paws? What could such a vision mean?

DEFILERS

Angels of this House are the most common fallen to be found in Los Angeles. Here in a sea of wasted talent and monstrous obsession with surface beauty, the Lammasu find rich meat upon which to feed and perfect forms for them to possess. From struggling actors and actress who will do anything for their big break to picture perfect trophy husbands and wives who are driven to suicide because they have gained five pounds,

the pathological obsession with beauty that fills the City of Angels has created an endless supply of hosts and thralls for the Defilers.

Because there are so many Defilers present in Los Angeles, it is difficult to speak of them in generalities, but generally the Fifth House likes to join causes. Depending on their faction they can become beacons of inspiration or depravity, for the others around them. They can be noble pillars of righteousness like Vohu Mano or demented creatures of nightmares like Inana.

Plot Ideas: Creativity is the realm of the Fifth House. What if a Defiler began to affect the dreams of a popular film director? What if that director made a movie using the images of his dreams? Would another demon recognize images taken from the Age of Wrath? How would the general human population react to such images? How would the infernal court react?

Defilers are attracted to passionate people, and they enjoy inspiring these passions. How many could a potent Defiler inspire simultaneously? What would happen if she suddenly removed herself from their presence? Would these several passionate people commit suicide, or turn to unsuspecting mortals for the inspiration they desperately crave? What if one of these unfortunates was related to or friendly with a person who was now possessed by a demon? How would the demon react?

DEVOURERS

The House of the Wild is the least represented of all the Houses in Los Angeles. Because of their affinity with nature, the Rabisu have always had difficulty settling in densely populated areas, and humanity has long been a mystery that the Sixth House can not quite understand. However just as the disasters which have plagued the City of Angels have created many potential hosts for the Scourges, so have the travails of Angelinos made many people susceptible to Devourers, who are mainly attracted to strength of purpose or determination.

Many people have dug in their heels and decided to weather all the calamities which torment Los Angeles, and this resolve is attractive to the Rabisu. Many are found in the poorer quarters of the city, and some in the middle class communities, and soak up the resentment and frustration simmering in the neighborhoods and barrios of East LA.

Plot Ideas: The Sixth House is known as the House of the Wild because of their sovereignty over nature, and amid the sprawl of Los Angeles there is little to attract the Devourers. Yet when escaping the Abyss, demons do not always have the luxury of picking and choosing their hosts and location. How do they feel about layering every inch of rich earth with hot asphalt and cold concrete? How will they respond? Are they



aware of how dependent the City of Angels, being essentially a desert town, is on the aqueducts which bring the life-giving water from the north?

In studying nature cycles one always studies the relationship of predator and prey. Does humanity have a naturally-occurring predator? Might a Devourer, warped by years in the Abyss, decide that to restore the natural balance so necessary for a ecosystem to survive just such a predator is needed? Where might such a predator be found, or could one be created? Would a Devourer fill this role herself if she could find no substitute? If she did fill this role, could she mask her activities from the eyes of other demons, and if not, how might other demons respond such activities?

SLAYERS

Over fifty percent of the young men in South Central have died of unnatural causes during the last year and the coming years show no sign of recession. Anyone who lives there knows that death could strike anytime, any place, and this has bred a kind of obsession with death which is highly conducive to attracting a Slayer's attention. Likewise, the homeless of the city live in constant fear of death in spite of the clement weather patterns of southern California (it is one of the only places in the world where it is unusual to see rain in the summer months) because so many of the Seventh House find hosts here.

The Halaku affinity with death makes them wonderful villains, especially because they need not be mindless killers but rather careful and crafty reapers of human or fallen souls. Given the weakened state in which the fallen now exist, it has become possible for crafty demons to stalk their brethren as a means of easily increasing their own power.

Plot Ideas: The obvious choice for a villain from the Seventh House would be to create a serial killer, but Slayers were originally mortified at the prospect of killing humans. Humanity was intended to be immortal like their creators. Now that demons are being merged with humans and subjected to human emotions, might this old horror at the thought of people dying return? Might such a Slayer try to prevent the dying from passing on to a mystery the Slayer knows nothing about? If death is now a natural part of the system of life how dangerous is it if people are not allowed to die? What might it feel like if somebody was horribly mauled in an automobile accident, but could not die? Might such an unfortunate just continue to exist in an endless cycle of agony? What if that tortured person was a relative or friend of a possessed human? How would that demon react?

Nobody knows what happens to the human soul after the body dies. It is that fear which lead the Seventh House to construct the spirit realm to house some of

these souls, but a disaster has all but destroyed that realm. This has not disposed of all of those spirits which had traveled that realm. Could some of those spirits, with the help of a Slayer, still interact with the mortal world? How might such a combination express themselves? Even if the ghost moved from host to host, or simply dispelled afterwards, would patterns still appear that another Slayer might recognize?

FACtIONS

The House a demon belongs largely determines what lore she studies and the form her angelic identity takes, but the ideology which a demon most subscribes to is best understood by which faction, if any, they join. Here is a brief outline of how the five primary factions operate in Los Angeles.

FAUSTIANS

If Spentu Mainyu learns of a Faustian arriving in LA, he will immediately attempt to recruit them; failing that he will try to keep them so tied up in political maneuvering within the court as to render them unable to directly compete with his attempted takeover of the entertainment industry. He detests using murder, and will go to great lengths to avoid using so final a solution, but this should not be mistaken for a reticence or a refusal should he be pushed too far.

A Faustian who escapes the notice or influence of Spentu Mainyu will find Los Angeles to be a veritable wonderland of power, influence, money and fame. Angelinos' obsession with style and artifice makes them tailor-made to suit the Faustians' interests. From high finance to dirty deals cut in the back rooms of South Central, the City of Angels is like a vast board game for these master manipulators, packed with a dizzying variety of playing pieces to be chosen, used and discarded when their usefulness is at an end.

Faustians in Los Angeles move through a variety of different arenas, spinning their webs of influence through city government, the entertainment industry, street gangs and the multitude of religious groups that were ubiquitous to LA even before the earthquake struck. There is little sense of organization among the faction at this time, as most members are kept off balance by Spentu Mainyu or are too busy taking advantage of the current chaos to build their own power base as quickly as possible.

Plot Ideas: Monstrous Faustians use humanity as mere tools, whereas the finest of the faction regard people more as partners, even sometimes allies in the greater struggle to subjugate humanity as a whole. How many pacts could a clever Faustian form with the needy and greedy inhabitants of the Tri-County Area? Once formed, how careful will these demons be with the

welfare of these thralls? If they are careless might other demons notice the signs of abuse in the thralls? How does this abuse sit with the characters? Can they free the unhappy thrall from so despicable a master?

CRYPTICS

The Cryptics are profoundly interested in controlling LA for two reasons. One is obviously to have influence on the entertainment industry, and the other stems from their general desire to control every major travel hub, like New York, Atlanta, London, etc. To this end they have sent the capable Al-Lat to establish a beachhead. Upon arrival, the Lady decided to play a passive game by insinuating her followers into key positions in the Court and waiting for an opportunity to seize outright control.

But circumstances have quickly moved beyond her control. A second court was established which she responded to by infiltrating it as she had the first, but not as thoroughly. Then she learned that not only were three Earthbound present in the city, but also the Morningstar himself. While she was trying to deal with this, Devil's Night erupted, and culminated in Lucifer manifesting himself for all the world to see. As if that were not enough, two of her followers are losing their fight with Torment and turning into vicious killers, although Al-Lat is not yet aware of this.

The leaders of the Cryptics are considering replacing Al-Lat, not because she is incompetent but simply because the situation is expanding beyond anybody's ability to predict. However, for right now they are waiting and trusting their field commander.

Just as Spentu Mainyu is trying to recruit every Faustian who enters the city, Al-Lat is attempting to secure the help of every Cryptic who arrives. Her job is made easier by the fact that she has, for now at least, the full support of the Cryptic leadership. The other difference is that Al-Lat does not try to interfere with or punish any who do not join. She simply ignores them.

Despite the fact that most Cryptics are attracted to the older cultures of Europe and Asia in order to study the learning that is held there, there is plenty to recommend Los Angeles to itinerant Cryptics even aside from Lucifer's manifestation. The museums and universities of the city contain scores of rare manuscripts, some more ancient and profound than their mortal curators realize. Some may contain tantalizing hints of the period after the war and the reasons behind the Morningstar's disappearance, not to mention the activities of the mysterious and deadly Earthbound. By the same token, many Cryptics come to the city simply to study how the various human cultures have blended together and where they have failed to do so. Studying the state of the mortal world and the interrelationships

with human culture, these seekers of mystery are sifting through the scattered leaves of human civilization in hopes of discovering how and where the Babel project went awry. Finally, as much as the Cryptics seek knowledge for the power it brings, they also realize that information in the wrong hands can cause untold damage to the fallen and humanity alike. There are some fallen in the city who hunt for ancient secrets for the express purpose of denying the knowledge to the unworthy. As the cliché goes, there are some things that humankind — and some demons — are simply not meant to know.

Plot Ideas: Their time in the Abyss has led the Cryptics to question what they did in the rebellion. This does not mean they think they made a mistake. It simply means they feel the need to study the world carefully to determine if a mistake was made, and if it was then what should be done about it. But how can they go about studying their actions and the Almighty's intentions now that they can no longer use their fullest powers or even contact the Almighty at all? But humans contain Faith which is a paler version of how the Almighty powered his angels in times gone past, so could a potential answer be found in this? Do humans contain a secret that the demons never suspected? Has the Almighty put something in them which might reveal the answers to this secret? If yes, how to go about finding it? Maybe vivisections might reveal some information? Also, might tests conducted under intense physical conditions uncover something interesting? If a demented Cryptic were to start conducting such experiments on humanity, could other demons recognize the supernatural hand?

LUCIFERANS

Obviously, until recently there was little about LA which attracted the attention of the Luciferans to the West Coast, but now there is. Before, the stodgy loyalists were content to leave Southern California to the ambitions of the other demons, especially when Baroness Kishar arrived and assumed control of the infernal court there.

There was no communication between Kishar and her allies in the Luciferan faction. Los Angeles was not considered important so long as it remained quiet, and Spentu Mainyu made quite sure that the area stayed quiet for all intents and purposes. Thus nobody in the higher levels of the faction had any idea of how badly things were going until the Devil's Night Riots erupted.

Naturally, the appearance of the Morningstar has made Los Angeles the single most important place on the Earth for the Luciferans, drawing scores of the fallen from every part of the world. Unlike many of the other factions, who are vulnerable to conflicting personal

agendas and internecine struggles, the Luciferans are generally more unified and loyal to one another, placing the goal of reunification over any personal concerns. These demons have spread out across the city, recruiting human eyes and ears and conducting searches on their own, sometimes taking them into jealously guarded territory such as Manishtusu's holdings in South Central. What the faction currently lacks in the city is, ironically, a strong leader — someone who can gather the Luciferans together and organize their efforts.

Plot Ideas: The Luciferans remain loyal to their old leader, but some of the leaders of this movement feel that the Morningstar's sudden appearance and even more sudden disappearance has done more harm than good. How might such leaders respond? What if they were adept illusionists? If they could only somehow control the words that Lucifer might say if he appeared again how much good could the do their cause? If they used their powers of illusions and kept the secondary appearances short could they deceive other demons into believing that Lucifer was speaking to them? If they could do this, for how long could they maintain the deception? How many people would they have to enlist to maintain the illusion? Might some of those people become dissatisfied with such work? And if they became unhappy, might they talk injudiciously?

RAVENERS

There is a three-pronged war taking place for control of Los Angeles, but only one faction is aware of it. The Faustians and Cryptics fight a battle of politics and patience, each waiting for the other to make a mistake so that they can capitalize on it and claim the city for their own. What neither side is aware of is that the Raveners are present in force — in fact, they are the most common faction in LA at the present — and they are responsible for much of the chaos taking place. Several of the city's high-ranking fallen are not only members of this violent faction, they are also allied with monsters more terrible still — the Earthbound, in the form of Manishtusu and Enshagkushanna.

These alliances mean that the Raveners in the city are more demented, powerful and dangerous than they might be elsewhere, able to take advantage of their masters' influence and resources to manipulate the tensions in both human and fallen relations to sow the seeds of violence and upheaval. Chaos at every level of the city — from elected officials to the lowliest street gang in the barrio — provides countless opportunities for the Raveners to insinuate themselves and lead mortals and demons alike to destruction. The gangs and the police in particular make excellent catspaws for the faction, providing a seemingly endless supply of manpower, weapons and money to tear at one another — and the city — in

the process. In the realm of fallen politics, the tensions between the city's two courts create many possibilities for the Raveners to exploit, influencing both sides to escalating levels of violence until both are drawn into a downward spiral of destruction and bloodshed.

Plot Ideas: In this age of weapons of mass destruction and deadly viruses, how long will it be before the newly escaped fallen learn enough to use such means to extract their revenge from humanity? If a Ravener, for instance, were to learn of the Ebola virus, might said demon be tempted to steal samples of that deadly virus to lace water supplies of major cities? If this demon's theft were to be reported on the news would another demon recognize the supernatural talents of the thief? Might these two theoretical demons even know each other? Maybe instead of lacing the water supply a demon could use its natural immunity to diseases and the such to infect a body and act as a kind of Typhoid Mary. The possibilities are terrifying.

RECONCILERS

The Reconciler faction is small but resolutely active in Los Angeles, which is hardly surprising considering that idealism and dreams frequently go hand in hand. They are led by Vohu Mano, whose tireless efforts earn them much admiration but whose total lack of tact prevents them from holding the ground his efforts earn.

Like everyone else the Reconcilers are anxious to learn why the Morningstar was not with them in the Abyss and what he has been doing in the interim, so many of their number are migrating towards Los Angeles to explore what is going on. Further, the vast human drama being played out among the ruins of the city in the wake of Devil's Night presents a challenge to the faction that many are hard-pressed to ignore: can they rebuild a better place from the ashes? If not in the City of Angels, where else?

The Century City Plaza presents a golden opportunity for the faction to put their beliefs to the test. If they can rebuild the plaza along the lines of the original vision espoused by its developers, could they not create a sanctuary of safety, self-reliance and prosperity within the turmoil of Los Angeles? From there they could extend their efforts to the rest of the city with the gleaming Century Towers as a shining symbol of the future for all Angelinos.

Of course, this is easier said than done. Financial hurdles notwithstanding, the faction would have to assemble builders, architects and planners to restore Century City to its original self, then find individuals with the proper leadership and vision to draw city residents to relocate and then ensure that they could support themselves within the community. Finally,

they would have to protect the new city from outside threats, both mortal and fallen, and the faction as a whole is not noted for its fierceness in battle. In short, the effort would require a massive coalition of people and demons with a variety of skills and abilities, cutting across race, gender, House and even faction. Certainly a daunting task, but one that most Reconcilers would pursue with a passion.

Plot Ideas: Although Reconcilers are not wont to commit crimes or pervert humanity, that does not guarantee that they always act in the right. Might a well-meaning Reconciler mistake Lucifer's manifestation for a message to reveal the existence of the fallen to the rest of the world? Might this demon attempt to reveal his true nature, and that of all demons, to humanity, regardless of the cost? How would the court react to such revelations? Is it even wise to tell all of humanity the truth?

CHRONICLE SEEDS

The following are outlines for five possible chronicles set in the City of Angels. Like everything else in this book, you, the Storyteller, should feel free to alter, combine or dispense with any part of these ideas. They are provided to help jumpstart ideas in your own head, and to help beginning Storytellers construct chronicles which you and your characters can enjoy over long periods of time.

THE TREASURE HUNT

Background: In the first battle of the Great Rebellion Lucifer fought with a scythe thrown to him by one of his followers. He fought the Archangel Michael who wielded a flaming sword, and during the wars that followed that sword became a symbol of terror for the fallen. Yet on the eve of their defeat a rumor spread throughout the fallen that the sword had been stolen out from underneath Michael's watchful gaze.

The truth is more complex. Before surrendering, Lucifer went to Michael. No one knows what was spoken between these mighty foes, but at the end of the meeting Michael cast away his sword and left it for all time. Later, once the fallen were imprisoned in the Abyss, Lucifer located the sword and hid it away in a special realm that can only be achieved by gathering together three relics that can unlock the gateway. The door to this realm was placed on what is now Santa Catalina Islands.

Involving the characters: If the characters are Cryptics then they can start by being attached to Al-Lat's expedition or be recruited by the Lady herself to find Gripontel's artifact. A group of Raveners might be ordered into the city by their commanders to find an artifact of undisclosed power. The same could hold true to a group of Faustians, Luciferans or Reconcilers. If the

group is a mixture of factions then they could come across a note stuck in an old book making reference to a gateway which leads to a treasure of great power.

Throughout history, human magicians have searched for relics of great power left over from the legendary past. During his searches, a certain magician compiled detailed notes regarding the rumored existence of the Thee Keys of Lucifer. The notebooks of this diligent magician (whose name was Thothamun) hold a list of the keys needed to unlock the door, and other lesser mages have made mention of these notebooks. The characters might stumble across one of these later works to start them on the road.

The Plot: First there is the work of Thothamun. There are two places in Los Angeles to locate such a work: the Huntington Library or Johnson & Crowley's Booksellers. Depending on where you want the book to be found, you could tell a story of investigation, intrigue and combat focused on penetrating the library, or opt for a more challenging story of diplomacy and negotiation as they attempt to gain the book from Johnson & Crowley's fallen proprietor.

Once the book is acquired the characters will need to go in search of the components. There are three: the anvil on which the flaming sword was forged, a sword made by the same maker as the flaming sword and a

poem written by the Morningstar. All three items can be found in LA.

The anvil is the same one Nash Alhomany is searching the Rose Bowl Flea Market for, and in order to obtain it the characters will have to help the frantic Malefactor to locate it. The thief has hidden the anvil in the blimp which circles over the Rose Bowl. This is why Nash's compass cannot pinpoint the anvil's location.

A sword made by the same maker as the flaming sword can be found in the backroom of the White Tiger Curio Shop. How the characters acquire the sword is up to them, but if you want to make things more challenging, then have the sword stolen the night before the characters are about to acquire it. The thief could be a Ravener who learned of the sword and craves it for her own murderous schemes.

As for the poem, this requires some subtlety. The graffiti artist One-Eye has the poem locked away in his mind, and it is the words of this poem which he has been so skillfully working into his art. His memory is completely missing because he had it removed at Lucifer's request when Lucifer gave him the poem to memorize. The memory is in a sphere which is hidden in the San Bernardino Hills near the location of Tanya de Rossi's camp. To find it the characters will need Gripontel's artifact, and if they have not yet heard of this device One-Eye can fill them in.



Locating the sword: There are no maps to show the way to where the sword is hidden, so the only way to find the sword is to use Gripontel's artifact to lead the way. Since this is what Al-Lat has been unsuccessfully searching for, this search will bring the characters and Al-Lat into conflict. If the characters are working for Al-Lat then they can wean information out of her. Otherwise they will have to break into her office to rifle through her papers.

Al-Lat believes she has located the general location of the sextant. It is in the one portion of Los Angeles she has never been able to search: the Nickerson Garden Projects, home of Manishtusu, but to penetrate that fortress means storming the lair of a very powerful Earthbound.

The artifact is located in Psycho's house. The Slayer knows it is a powerful artifact, but does not understand how to work it. So for now he keeps it hidden in the crawl space in the closet of his room. It functions like a Geiger counter, keening ever louder as it draws closer to the artifact.

The sword's location: Michael's sword is hidden in a concealed bastion on Santa Catalina Island. Using Gripontel's artifact, it is possible to locate the bastion's concealed doorway, and the presentation of the three keys unlocks the powerful wards sealing the fortress. Unfortunately, the opening of the bastion unleashes a wave of pent-up Celestial energy that alerts nearly every fallen in the region. The characters must race against time to penetrate the bastion, locate the sword and escape before demons more powerful than they come looking for the source of the energy.

KINGMAKER

Background: There are two courts operating in Los Angeles and each one is headed by someone who should not be in charge. Anat's affiliations make her a true menace as head of a court. Kishar, while being a talented field commander, is ill suited for the task of governing a city. She knows this, but her absolute sense of propriety will not permit her to surrender the seat to anyone of a lesser rank unless she receives orders to do so from a superior.

The characters may want to promote one of their own to the elevated rank of Tyrant of Los Angeles, or they may simply believe that a better leader can be found than the unsuitable Kishar. One possible successor is Baroness Gao Yao, a Fiend who manifested in the body of wheelchair-bound host and is incapable of fighting her own battles, but could be an excellent advisor and mentor.

Kishar will not abdicate for Gao Yao because they are of equal rank but Kishar, being a Scourge, is of a more senior House, so the characters will need to find a way to depose the current Baroness. Gao Yao will want her

city to be at peace, so she might ask the characters to remove the threat of Anat, though anyone who attempts to meddle with the current political situation will find themselves at odds with Spentu Mainyu.

Challenges: First Gao Yao will want to test the characters' abilities. In the interests of stabilizing the city, she will prevail upon the characters to investigate and uncover the secretive Blood Court. Although the Blood Court is more stable and effective than the Infernal Court, it is still vulnerable because Kishar because of its relative anonymity. Uncovering clear evidence of the court's existence and presenting the information to Kishar would bring the wrath of the court down on Anat and her supporters.

This could be difficult, however, because Kishar is becoming distracted and warring with her Torment. There is also the difficulty of proving the Blood Court does exist, which Spentu Mainyu is working hard to prevent. The best way to obtain the proof would be to acquire video or audio recordings of Blood Court Ministers meeting and discussing their plots, and the best way to do that is to subvert one of the lieutenants of the Eagle Ministry.

Both chief ministers of the Eagle Ministries are losing control of their lieutenants, but Nasu is slipping more dramatically than Chenrezig, so finding one of her lieutenants to subvert should be fairly easy. Once the proof is obtained, three tasks must be accomplished to break the Blood Court's power: Nasu's murderous rampage must be uncovered and stopped, Vritran's efforts must be stymied and Ravana must be stopped.

Nasu is the easiest. As she slips further into Torment she becomes less guarded with her actions, and as her actions draw more attention it is simply a matter of time before she is denounced before the Infernal Court. Once denounced the characters should be free to act against her. They may not even encounter the wrath of Al-Lat if they wait for the court to order Nasu brought to heel.

It is a toss-up which will be harder to stop, Vritran or Ravana. While Vritran is more subtle and backed by Spentu Mainyu, he is not especially adept at his endeavors and must rely on the help of his assistants. To stop him the characters must either convince him that what he is doing would not be approved of by Lucifer — Vritran is a Luciferan, after all — but this would be very difficult to do. The easier task would be to expose some of Vritran's shadier dealings to Kishar, who would surely censure the Scourge.

Ravana's wrongdoings are easier to spot and combat, but the number of demons she and Guanli have absorbed has raised their lore to unimaginable levels. Also Guanli has been steadily producing artifacts using all of this newly-acquired lore, so actually attacking and

stopping the duo should be an enormous task stretching over the course of several stories.

Once these three are disrupted, the Blood Court will be too weakened to continue. With Vritran stopped, Spentu Mainyu will have to divert the majority of his efforts into making sure his primary plan continues which means he will no longer be active in either Court, and if the Lion Ministry can be decapitated, then the Blood Court will lose its primary striking power. Further, confessions from one or more of the senior court ministers would be sufficient to cast serious doubt upon the ruling power of Baroness Kishar, who was evidently oblivious to seeds of treason sown right under her nose. This is all the leverage Guanli would need to turn the tables on the Baroness and force her from power.

A SMALL MATTER OF REBELLION

Background: Where the other chronicle best begins by attacking the Blood Court, this one works better if the characters are rebels out to destroy the Infernal Court because Vohu Mano does not know that the Blood Court exists, and his problems are all with the Baroness he serves and the Auroch Ministry he is constantly feuding with.

It will take three things to destabilize the Infernal Court: eliminate Guanli, subdue Aglibol and neutralize Chenrezig. All three of these objectives should be extremely difficult, and they will need to be done in fairly quick succession or the removed minister will simply be replaced and the trouble will begin again.

In terms of combat Guanli, will definitely be the hardest to stop. The number of demons he and Ravana have absorbed has so greatly increased their lore that they are probably the most powerful demons in Los Angeles. To make matters worse Guanli has been steadily producing artifacts using all this newly acquired lore, so their thralls will be heavily armed as well.

Aglibol has turned the Huntington Library into a kind of headquarters and can, at a moment's notice, convert it into an armed camp. To subdue this fanatical Devil it will be necessary to remove the threat of the Huntington Library, and this would be especially important to Vohu Mano because the raids on the Reconciler are staged on the grounds of Huntington.

Neutralizing Chenrezig could be tricky for a couple of reasons. Firstly, he is Al-Lat's assistant and the member of her Cryptics who the Lady most relies on, so if he is in danger Al-Lat will move swiftly and harshly to defend Chenrezig, more so than the Fiend will do in his own defense. Next comes Kishar's respect for Chenrezig. Although she bitterly resents his questioning the propriety of staying loyal to Lucifer, the Fiend performs his duties admirably and diligently, something Kishar always respects. So Kishar, too, will move to defend the Fiend if

she perceives him to be in difficulty. And since Chenrezig is the All-Seeing Eye for the Eagle Ministry there is very little which escapes his notice for long.

The good news is that Chenrezig has a couple of decided weaknesses. Since learning that his old friend Manishtsu is in Los Angeles, he has been somewhat distracted. Not so much as to be detrimental to his duties, but some things are slipping past him now, whereas before very little was. However, the primary weakness Chenrezig has is his mortal host. Daniel Gopal was a citizen of India when he disappeared and a prominent one at that, so India has filed a missing person's complaint with the FBI and put pressure on the government to find their missing biochemist. A clever character group could cause Chenrezig no end of difficulty by simply telling the FBI where to find Daniel Gopal. Or the characters could try to convince Chenrezig to aid them. This would be far more difficult, but would gain them a powerful ally.

Once again, what the characters do to achieve these goals will determine what state the city is in and how best to proceed against the Blood Court, so do not plan too far into the future. These chronicle ideas work best if the Storyteller keeps a fluid approach to telling a story and reacts to what the characters do rather than carefully prescript every encounter. Also consider that as the Infernal Court weakens, the Blood Court will be strengthening, which means that the characters could destabilize the court like Vohu Mano wants only to see the city explode in violence under the grip of the ascendant Blood Court.

Potential Allies: Vohu Mano would support any effort that shakes up what he views as a corrupt and incompetent system, but never forget that Spentu Mainyu has a spy, Bartholomew Chandler, in the Mortal Ministry and so would be aware of any serious actions Vohu Mano might take, and Spentu Mainyu will be vigorously opposed to any effort which might threaten his delicate political balancing act. Also the Fell Knight Ashur could be a powerful ally, but because of his love for Kishar he could be a real double-edged sword.

THE BLOOD FEUD

Background: During the wars in the Age of Wrath, Ashur was once captured and held in the prison fortress of Sagan. From that labyrinth Kishar rescued her lover, but in doing this she left behind the army she normally commanded. Most of her soldiers understood and approved of her actions. They would have even followed her had she not so expressly forbidden it. Her success created a mighty stir amongst the followers of Lucifer who rejoiced that one of their own had so thwarted the plans of the Almighty in the name of so noble a cause as love.

THE MORNINGSTAR MYSTERY

Background: One of the oldest questions is why Lucifer, the most beloved and foremost of all angels, forsake his oath to the Creator and rebelled against heaven. A thousand possible answers exist, but none of them matter to the fallen. They only want to know why the First Rebel was not with them in the Abyss and what has he been doing during the interim. They thought they would have to spend years searching for their former leader crossing endless stretches of time and space, but suddenly the Morningstar manifested himself over the skies of Los Angeles. What had always been a vague desire now seemed possible.

But then, as suddenly as he appeared, he vanished. Every demon, every court, every faction across the world is sending agents to investigate Los Angeles. This could be an easy way to bring together a group of characters with wildly different characters and factions.

If the characters wish to investigate the physical location where Lucifer manifested, then they should help the court to subdue Manishtusu because the Morningstar appeared over the streets of downtown LA where Manishtusu holds considerable street-level influence. Manishtusu is too powerful to risk a direct confrontation, but the characters have the potential to seriously weaken his power if they target Manishtusu's primary henchmen like Psycho, Trip-9 and Antonio Gabrelli. During this time they may even be approached by agents of Belial who is still in the city, but the Great Beast should never be trusted, and only a fool would trust an alliance with this Earthbound.

Another track could be through Aglibol. After all it was this Devil's minions who actually cornered the Morningstar and forced the manifestation. Of course, Aglibol was working under the directions of Enshagkushanna, so pursuit of this line could end up not only with a confrontation at Huntington Library, but also at Catalina Island.

Potential Allies: These are everywhere, as are the potential enemies. It all depends on how the characters approach their investigation. For every ally there is somebody to be offended, and there is no way to conduct an investigation without getting drawn into the snarled political situation of LA. Eventually the characters will have to choose a side, because the Earthbound are too powerful to be faced without allies, and the more the merrier.

Not all of the fallen approved of her actions, however. Two commanders had forbidden Kishar to risk herself in so dangerous an operation, and when she succeeded, both commanders were made to feel foolish — something that every demon resents. Grifiel, leader of the Luciferans and reputed lover to Lucifer, and Suphlatus, the Duchess of Dust and leader of the Raveners, both forbade Kishar to attack Sagan, and they further insisted that she make no attempt whatsoever to save Ashur.

Either of these two would be willing to use a small group of newly-escaped demons to form a strike force to extract vengeance from Kishar by killing (if sent by Suphlatus) or crippling (if sent by Grifiel) Ashur. They would use a small and expendable group which, if it failed or was found out, they could deny ever knowing.

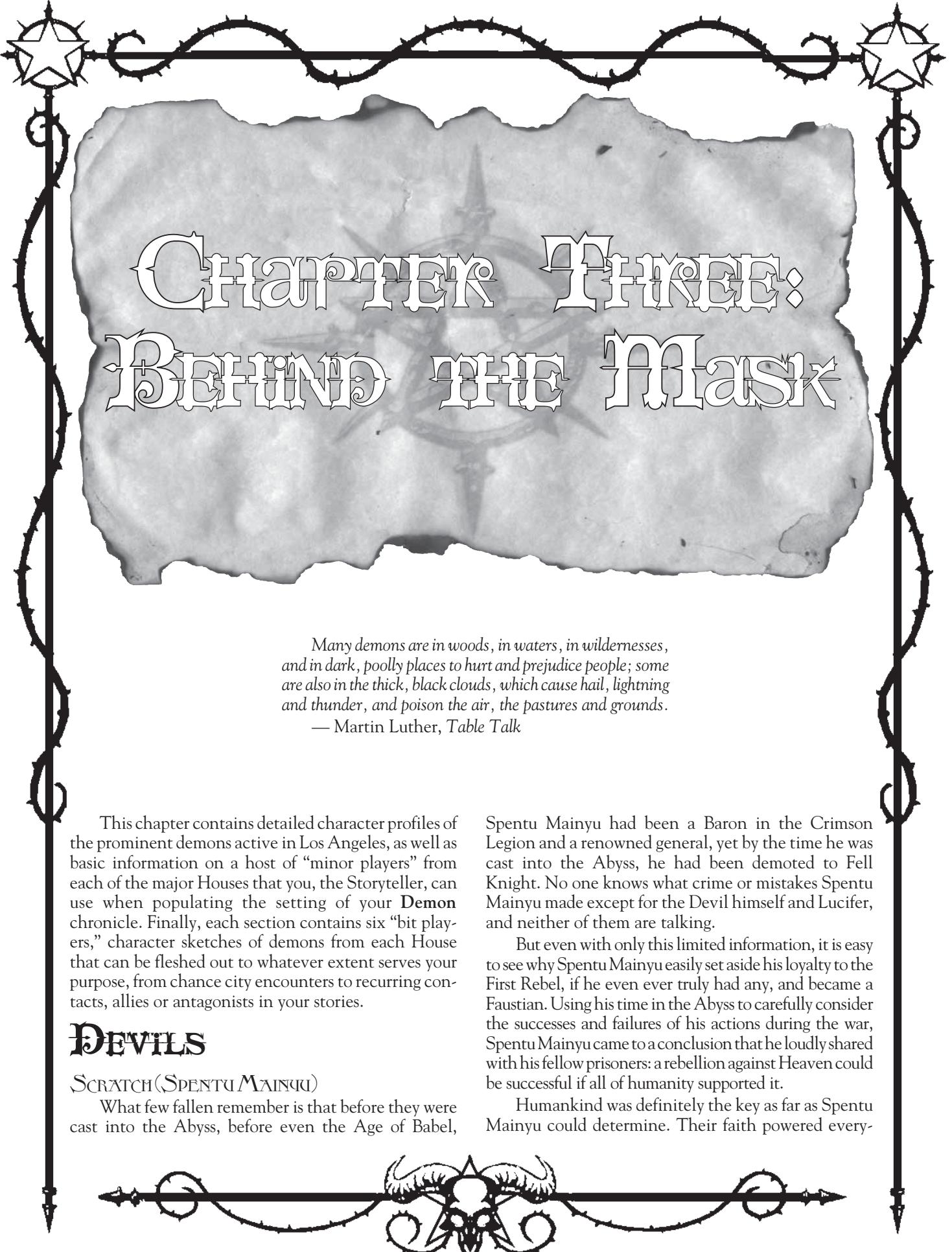
Such a group would not merely be ordered to attack Ashur, it would also be charged with keeping Kishar in power until a more suitable leader was found to replace her, so the group would first have to travel to LA and study the terrain before they swung into action. Also they would need to find some kind of weapon to use on Ashur, who was an extremely powerful warrior.

Getting Situated: An excellent place for the characters to start would be by insinuating themselves into either Eagle Ministry, although the Infernal Court might be the better choice to join, to gain access to the local information network. The easiest way to do this would be to help Mr. Johnson clear himself of the attention of the LAPD stemming from the disappearance of his au pair.

Once the group is installed in the court, keeping Kishar in power will be quite a challenge, and will almost certainly involve trying to neutralize one of the three Earthbound currently residing in Los Angeles. Since Enshagkushanna is the weakest of the three, he is the best one for characters to try to dislodge, and they might even receive assistance from the Blood Court because there is no love lost between Enshagkushanna and Anat. This could culminate in a raid on Catalina Island, which is where Enshagkushanna's reliquary is located.

By the way, neutralizing one of the Earthbound is so important because if Kishar is seen as eliminating such a threat then her renown will increase to such a level that very few would be anxious to even speak ill of her. Almost every demon fears and hates the Earthbound, and destroying one would earn a leader admiration from every Faction. So driving off one of the Earthbound is the simplest way to keep Kishar in power.





CHAPTER THREE: BEHIND THE MASK

Many demons are in woods, in waters, in wildernesses, and in dark, poonly places to hurt and prejudice people; some are also in the thick, black clouds, which cause hail, lightning and thunder, and poison the air, the pastures and grounds.

— Martin Luther, *Table Talk*

This chapter contains detailed character profiles of the prominent demons active in Los Angeles, as well as basic information on a host of “minor players” from each of the major Houses that you, the Storyteller, can use when populating the setting of your **Demon** chronicle. Finally, each section contains six “bit players,” character sketches of demons from each House that can be fleshed out to whatever extent serves your purpose, from chance city encounters to recurring contacts, allies or antagonists in your stories.

DEVILS

SCRATCH (SPENTU MAINYU)

What few fallen remember is that before they were cast into the Abyss, before even the Age of Babel,

Spentu Mainyu had been a Baron in the Crimson Legion and a renowned general, yet by the time he was cast into the Abyss, he had been demoted to Fell Knight. No one knows what crime or mistakes Spentu Mainyu made except for the Devil himself and Lucifer, and neither of them are talking.

But even with only this limited information, it is easy to see why Spentu Mainyu easily set aside his loyalty to the First Rebel, if he even ever truly had any, and became a Faustian. Using his time in the Abyss to carefully consider the successes and failures of his actions during the war, Spentu Mainyu came to a conclusion that he loudly shared with his fellow prisoners: a rebellion against Heaven could be successful if all of humanity supported it.

Humankind was definitely the key as far as Spentu Mainyu could determine. Their faith powered every-



thing, except the Almighty. Theoretically if enough of this faith could be harnessed then it could be used to create anything, even a new God.

Armed with this theory when he made his escape from the Abyss, Spentu Mainyu searched for a host that resonated with power and hunger. He found Scratch, a drug dealer who had just been double-crossed by an ambitious underling. Seizing Scratch just as the treacherous underling was leaving the room, Spentu Mainyu tore out the underling's heart and ate it.

Finding Scratch had been a lucky break for Spentu Mainyu, because the handsome youth was no mere street dealer. Scratch had been a purveyor of quality drugs to the rich and powerful of Los Angeles, including but not limited to film producers, corporate executives, and manufacturing giants. As such Scratch wielded a great deal of quiet influence, but the mortal had not appreciated this. Spentu Mainyu did.

Using these contacts quickly and efficiently, Spentu Mainyu located several newly arrived fallen and quickly grasped the political layout of Los Angeles. His initial efforts to subvert prominent members of the Los Angeles Police Department were thwarted by the Earthbound Enshagkushanna, but the crafty Devil was successful in other organizations, exerting a modicum of control within the civilian government and making inroads into the local offices of the FBI. Not long after, he made his presence known to the demons in the city and declared himself the Tyrant of Los Angeles, lord and master of the Infernal Court.

Spentu carefully and deliberately organized the court in a way that ensured a certain degree of order and control over the city, but with enough internal tension that his ministers would be too busy feuding with one another to

plot against him. He chose two bitter rivals to head the Ministry of Aurochs and the Ministry of Dust, Aglibol and Vohu Mano respectively, who wasted no time opposing one another's interests. For the Ministry of Eagles, Spentu Mainyu tapped Chenrezig, a newcomer to the city, and Guanli, another stranger, was elevated to the Ministry of Lions. The post of Dragon Minister, the court's official inquisitor, was deliberately kept vacant. Spentu claimed that he was waiting for the right demon to fill such a vital role, and frequently used the open position as a potential reward to broker deals with members of the court. Since the Court of Los Angeles currently owes no fealty to any higher court, Spentu has so far managed to get away with this political gamble, though the Devil knows that sooner or later he will have a Lord Inquisitor poking into his affairs.

The Infernal Court was a clever piece of construction, and once in place it allowed Spentu Mainyu to pursue his real goal. Through the medium of television, Spentu Mainyu believed he had found the resource he needed to unite humanity's faith. Working with the Scourge Vritran, Spentu Mainyu went to work gaining control over a network of television producers who had the power to change the type of programs being sent out over the airwaves.

But all was not well in other parts of the Devil's domain. Internal tensions in the City of Angels were threatening to spin out of control, and managing them was taking up too much of the tyrant's time and attention. It was then that Kishar arrived.

When he heard of her arrival Spentu Mainyu wanted to dance with joy, but his politically cunning mind knew better. He waited a couple of days, encouraging the other fallen to believe that he would resist handing over power to this newcomer, and then as battle lines were being drawn he capitulated without a fight. This move not only spared him from the headaches of running the city, but it also earned him the gratitude of the new Baroness, who named him to the still vacant post of Dragon Minister.

To ensure that he would be free to pursue his plans, Spentu Mainyu needed a city on the constant verge of an explosion but never quite crossing into outright conflict. To that end he secretly approached Anat and helped her establish a second court, the Blood Court, and found himself, for the second time, being named as head of the Dragon Ministry. What is almost ironic is that Spentu Mainyu is spending as much time trying to maintain tension between the two courts as he spent actually running the city, so he has not yet benefited much from his scheming.

Image: Scratch does not look the part of the proud, aristocratic Devil. He has soft, rounded features, dark skin and an easygoing, affable demeanor. His movements

are graceful and slow, and his hands have almost preternaturally long fingers. He is fond of coin tricks and other sleights of hand, often unconsciously rolling coins across his long fingers as he contemplates his next move.

Roleplaying Hints: Spentu Mainyu hides a ruthless and methodical personality behind the soft, friendly manners of Scratch. Unlike many Devils, who prefer to use their charisma as a club to bully others into agreement, Spentu is charming, seemingly open and sympathetic to potential friends and allies. He is equal parts snake-oil salesman and hard-nosed diplomat.

Nature: Conniver

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Computer 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Etiquette 2, Expression 2, Firearms 1, Intuition 3, Law 3, Leadership 3, Occult 3, Politics 4, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Eminence 2, Influence 4, Pacts 3, Resources 3, Legacy 2

Willpower: 9

Faith: 8

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Radiance

Lore: Radiance 4, Celestials 2, Flame 2, Humanity 3

JESUS ARROYA (AGLIBOL)

Deep in the heart of the Devil Aglibol exists a dark core of jealousy. When he looked on the world he helped create, all he could see was that the parts Lucifer oversaw were better than his, yet even as he resented the Morningstar's preeminence Aglibol adored Lucifer. When the Great Debate began, Aglibol declared loudly and fiercely against it, yet when Lucifer announced his support, Aglibol joined the cause without hesitation.

Throughout the Ages that followed, Aglibol could always be found at Gehinnom or near Lucifer's side. He rose through the ranks quickly and effortlessly, not as a measure of his skill and ability but more by virtue of his unswerving loyalty and devotion to the Lightbringer. He adored the Prince for his effortless perfection, even as the Lightbringer's reflected glory highlighted Aglibol's own perceived shortcomings. As the war ground on Aglibol frequently abused the authority Lucifer vested in him, shielded from reproach by his rank and stature in the Morningstar's grand councils. By the war's end, Aglibol was widely despised by the nobles of the infernal host, and when it was clear that Lucifer was not destined for the Abyss, these lords turned on their petty tormentor without mercy, making his existence a literal hell. When the Maelstrom ruptured the walls of the Abyss, Aglibol was one of the first escapees.

On Earth, Councilman Jesus Arroya, one of only three minority councilmen on the fifteen-member governing body of Los Angeles and the only Latino, worked late into the night every night of the week when he finally succumbed to the incessant pressures of the job. Although it was only a nervous breakdown, not death, it weakened the mortal tether sufficiently for Aglibol to take control.

As a human Councilman, Arroya had been a fair but dedicated crusader for the rights of his people, but with Aglibol in charge that quickly changed. Where Arroya wanted his fellow men to help themselves to become stronger and had fought to level the playing field against white politicians and businessmen, Aglibol felt only resentment at mistreatment heaped on him for no better reason than the color of his skin. Within two months Aglibol moved from the humble house in East LA where Arroya had lived most of his life to a palatial estate in Beverly Hills, financed by a tide of recent bribes and kickbacks. Not long after, Aglibol came to the attention of the city's new tyrant, Spentu Mainyu. Recognizing the Devil's crippling self-doubts, Spentu "rewarded" Aglibol with the Ministry of Aurochs, well aware of the feud it would create between Aglibol and Vohu Mano, a demon whose enmity for Aglibol went back to the Age of Wrath. Spentu was not disappointed.

The chief weapon Aglibol has employed against Vohu Mano is Nuestra Familia and the sexual orientation of Vohu Mano's host. Playing upon the machismo of the gang culture Aglibol has successfully stirred up the hatred of many teenage Hispanics who are eager to prove their manhood with acts of hatred and violence, particularly against gays. The homicide rate in WeHo has doubled.

It took the rumors of Lucifer's presence in Los Angeles to shake Aglibol out of his pit bull-like determination to destroy Vohu Mano. Even then the response



was curious. Aglibol made no attempt to reform his corrupt ways. Instead he convinced himself that it was an impostor who roamed the streets, and he sent his gangs to hunting for the fool that dared pretend to be the First Rebel.

The gangs who cornered Lucifer and forced his hand during the Devil's Night riots were Aglibol's own Nuestra Familia, not any of the three Earthbound's thralls. None survived the encounter, so Aglibol does not know if the Morningstar learned who had set the gangs on his trail. Consequently Aglibol now spends his days hiding in his quarters, rarely communicating with anyone, even the Ministry he is supposed to oversee.

Image: Aglibol's appears to be a Hispanic man in his late forties. His years of dedication and stress had left him haggard and thin, but Aglibol's devotion to easy life has changed that. He is not yet fat but definitely headed in that direction, yet some trace of the hard years still lingers in the corners of his eyes.

In bearing Aglibol is insufferably arrogant. Although his of short stature, he still manages to give the impression of looking down his nose at everyone. Lately his fears have forced all other thoughts out of his mind, including those of hygiene, so his black hair is matted and an unpleasant miasma of body odor surrounds him.

Roleplaying Hints: Aglibol has always been a little creepy because of his internal conflict over his love for Lucifer, but this fairly minor flaw has since become a raging obsession. He argues with himself and suspects everyone of trying to betray him to Lucifer, even though he has done nothing wrong (so he insists).

His influence has left a mark on the street gangs of East LA, but the recent absence of his leadership means that they are running out of control. The Baroness has ordered him to rein in the excesses of his gangs, but Aglibol pretends to have not received the messages. He knows a confrontation is coming and he wants to avoid it, but does not know how.

Nature: Autocrat

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Computer 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Etiquette 2, Finance 2, Firearms 1, Intimidation 1, Intuition 1, Law 2, Leadership 2, Politics 3, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Influence 1, Eminence 2, Fame 2, Pacts 2, Legacy 2

Willpower: 6

Faith: 7

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Celestials

Lore: Celestials 3, Flame 1, Fundament 2, Humanity 2

MINOR PLAYERS

JULIAN FORESTER(?)

Julian Forester opened the hottest and most exciting clubs in the city, but they never lasted more than six months because Julian was a master of hype but lousy at figures. However, he was moving too fast to notice the failures he left in his wake. Key to this obliviousness of his was his dependency on rock cocaine, and it was the white witch that led him into oblivion. Julian Forester never died, but his soul was weakened by long nights of drug-induced euphoria.

The Devil that possessed Julian has little to no memory of what happened to it. It only feels a cold contempt for the mass of humanity around it, but lucky for Julian it is a better businessman than he is. After considering his options, the new Julian decided to open a coffeehouse instead of another club, and he sought out Spentu Mainyu for financial support.

The plan was to establish a place where all the fallen of Los Angeles could come, relax and openly discuss the matters of the moment. Of course, the place would be heavily bugged, and so would record every word spoken and every glance shared. Spentu Mainyu heartily approved of the idea, and Julian Forester was in business.

He leased a shop on 3rd Street Promenade in Santa Monica and refurbished it as a cozy little cafe for the idle shopper named the Vertigo Coffeehouse. Julian also leased the land behind the Vertigo where he built the secret meeting spaces for the fallen to gather in. The two buildings are connected with by a doorway in the middle of the three unisex bathrooms which is masked by an illusion that, of course, every fallen can easily see through. A very observant human might notice that an inordinate number of patrons take an awfully long time in the lavatory, but very few shoppers are that attentive after a day spent in the hot sun.

The fallen use the Vertigo as rendezvous and club-house. No one seems to have realized the place is bugged because the fallen as a whole are not accustomed to worrying about electronic observation, so Julian Forester has learned some very interesting things over time. Some of what he learns he shares with his patron, Spentu Mainyu, but most he keeps for himself.

In his politics, Julian Forester is a Faustian. He serves Spentu Mainyu because the Devil is the strongest fallen in the city, but he is also patiently spinning webs of influence that might one day lead to his own bid for control of the city's court.

Willpower: 7

Faith: 6

Torment: 6

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Flames

Lore: Flame 3, Fundament 1, Humanity 1

BARTHOLOMEW CHANDLER (VAHISHTA)

Bartholomew Chandler was a vapid wastrel. As the only son who stood to inherit the vast Chandler wealth, he had no wants and less purpose. To fill this boredom he took to using drugs, and inevitably suffered an overdose. His would-be friends abandoned his comatose body in a hotel on Route 66, but before Chandler died, he was found by the Devil known as Vahishta.

For a couple of days Vahista wandered the streets of Los Angeles, amazed by what he saw, following the memories of his host back to Chandler's apartment, his riches and his lifestyle. Soon, Vahishta developed a tactic of getting a crowd of influential people to use a variety of drugs, the effects of which he could easily negate, and then, making use of their altered states, he would interrogate them for whatever information he desired.

Spentu Mainyu, whose alter-ego Scratch supplied Bartholomew and his friends with their drugs, soon spotted the ambitious Devil and recruited him. Vahishta willingly joined the Faustians, and then the Ministry of Dust, where he serves under Vohu Mano but secretly reports to Spentu Mainyu.

Vahishta can be found at most high-class society functions peddling Scratch's product and pumping the foolish for information. He is an adept socialite and few realize that they are being manipulated. All they remember is how much they enjoyed confiding in that nice young man Bartholomew. Vohu Mano neither likes nor trusts this lieutenant but does not have enough resources to replace him.

Willpower: 5

Faith: 6

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Radiance

Lore: Radiance 3, Flame 1, Fundament 1, Humanity 2

TROY DANIELS (BAPHOMEL)

As a teenager Troy Daniels joined the Young Republicans; in college he served as a Senator. From his youngest days Troy dreamt of being a leader, and he spent his adult life pursuing this goal. This brought him to the offices of the mayor where he worked as an intern. He spent his nights compiling data on the other politicians of the city and running errands for the lieutenant-mayor.

On one of these errands he was hit by a drunk driver and suffered immediate brain damage, but Baphomel was there and in need of a host. The Troy Daniels who walked away from the wreck was a different creature. Baphomel was tired of serving others. He had followed others all through the war and the Abyss had been his only reward. Now Baphomel wanted to be the one giving the orders.

Using the information Daniels had assembled, Baphomel began a campaign of blackmail targeted towards the city's politicians and fundraisers. Troy had



been an inveterate record keeper and had witnessed more indiscretions than he had realized. Baphomel was clever and ruthless. Soon the Devil became the lieutenant-mayor, a post he could never have achieved under legal circumstances.

In philosophy, Baphomel is closest to a Cryptic but has declared for the Luciferans because he currently serves as an agent in the Ministry of Aurochs under the staunchly conservative Aglibol. From his position as lieutenant-mayor, Baphomel was Aglibol's chief line of information to potential threats to the fallen of Los Angeles, but Devil's Night has negated that usefulness. What is worse for Baphomel is the destruction of City Hall because that is where he hid most of the proof of wrongdoings that he used to blackmail the other politicians.

These days Baphomel spends his time haunting the remains of City Hall, hoping that the construction workers who are clearing the site will eventually come across the black safe where all the material so vital to his survival was stored.

Willpower: 7

Faith: 8

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Flames

Lore: Flames 3, Celestials 2, Fundament 2

TANYA DE ROSSI(?)

Tanya de Rossi was an unattractive woman. She was large and imposing with a personality like a bad-tempered shark. But her overbearing personality and obliviousness to the discomfort of others gained her a measure of success in her field of running team-building retreats for corporate executives where her rudeness was often politely mistaken for focus.

She suffered a severe heart attack brought on by high-blood pressure at the young age of thirty-six, and her weakened state attracted the attention of a Devil who had newly escaped from the Abyss. The shock of suddenly inhabiting a mortal body, however, drove the demon's memories deep into Tanya's subconscious, so for a short while it was business as usual for the retreat planner.

Then she was approached by a representative of the Earthbound demon Enshagkushanna. The Earthbound had a plan, and Tanya was the perfect foil. Foolishly Tanya accepted Enshagkushanna's terms. In return for certain powers Tanya reopened her camp, but this time for the children of wealthy Angelinos who want to send them away from the chaos that is the City of Angels.

The camp is a perfectly ordinary summer camp, with one exception: the food is poisoned. Not to a level that is instantly fatal, but enough to weaken the attendees' health and ravage their minds over a period of weeks. During this period, while the child's health fails, Tanya has the sickest children taken to the camp infirmary, where a group of the Earthbound's thralls attempt to summon a demon from the Abyss and bind it into the child's body. So far the process has netted a dozen such servants that Enshagkushanna has returned to their mortal homes in the city, where they wait as "sleeper agents" for the day when Baal might try to remove the Earthbound from his position in the city. So far, Tanya has supported the Earthbound willingly, though should the demon's memory eventually emerge, it's possible that her cooperation might undergo a sudden and dramatic change.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 6

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Celestials

Lore: Celestials 2, Flame 1, Radiance 1, Humanity 2

BIT PLAYERS

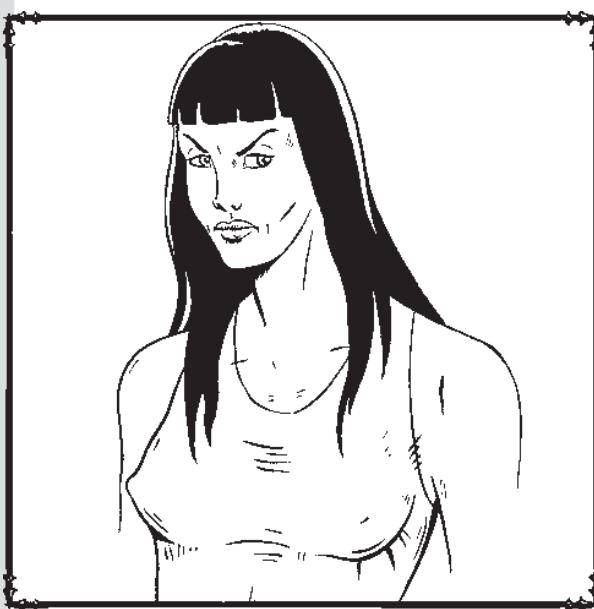
MICKEY ALDEN (AZHVIN)

Mickey Alden was a scion of hedonistic repute within the record industry — as an executive for Thunderdome Records, he was responsible for the "winning and dining" of big artists, the act of which often involved hookers, heroin, and firing automatic weapons at his ranch outside of LA. His overindulgent lifestyle left him a comatose mess, and so the Devil Azhvin took control. Azhvin, an angel who entered Lucifer's crusade in an attempt of self-gain, has changed little and now espouses Faustian ideals. Now, as "Mickey Alden," Azhvin throws contracts to burgeoning artists under the banner of wealth and fame, waits for their star to go supernova, then ditches them for the "next big thing." He has enthralled several up-and-comers, and

awaits the day when a fallen musician enters his office. He mistrusts all other fallen, and yet constantly pursues new "deals" with them in an effort to obtain greater influence. He can be found at most social events involving any member of either of LA's demon courts.

CANDY SANCHEZ (WADJET)

Porn is a massive industry in and out of the City of Angels — bigger than Hollywood, that's for sure. Candy Sanchez (real and "stage" name) was a fixture of low-budget gang-bang videos, and had recently signed a



contract with a larger, more upscale production company when her doctor informed her that she was HIV-positive. Candy went into solitude, locking herself away in her Santa Monica condominium, taking calls from no one but her brother Carlos, until she went into the hospital with pneumonia. The combination of depression and illness left her body and mind vacant, and the Devil Wadjet took hold. Everyone viewed her new vigor as a "miraculous recovery." Since then, Candy has become something of an icon for the Women's Rights movement, speaking out against the abuses (and self-abuses) of American women. This Devil has also achieved a small though growing role on the late night serial drama *Century Gardens*. Wadjet is a lone Reconciler, seeking to make peace with God through His creation, the humans. As such, she is mistrusted due to her place of relative influence and her desire to make recompense for what she feels was an "error" on the parts of all the fallen.

JOHN PARK (MARUT)

Harut was formed from the same divine material as his companion, Marut — the two angels, both members

of the Ebon Legion, considered themselves brother and sister — as well as lovers. Both angels were fiercely devoted to Lucifer, and opted to rebel not because of humanity, but ultimately to gain favor of the Lightbringer and impress his peers. The two angels went into Dûdâel, the hated fortress, and became both gladiators and spies for Lucifer. When the Abyssal sentence was levied against the rebels, Harut and Marut were never found without one another in the darkness and ash. Upon escaping, the two were separated, and Harut found the body of John Park, a 55-year-old charismatic minister at the Sojourner First Baptist Church of Los Angeles. Park was descended from the original founder of the Church, an escaped slave called Paul Harmon Park, and continued the policies of “civil disobedience” espoused by Martin Luther King. Park’s body was left bereft of substance by a series of strokes, and Harut found his way in. Harut immediately left the congregation behind, despite the pesky memories of Park, and now he seeks his “other half,” Marut, with obsessive single-mindedness. He will pay handsomely anyone who can help him find her, and harm anyone who stands in his way.

JOHNETTE EGGERS (MARUT)

Marut (sister and lover of Harut, above) came to the City of Angels and found the new corpse of an eighteen-year-old “aspiring actress” from Kentucky, Johnette Eggers. Johnette, while leaving an audition for a detergent commercial, was pulled into an alley and raped, and for the merest moment, her soul departed and Marut entered. Marut attacked her assailants with a broken bottle and a length of pipe and decimated the aggressors in a violent frenzy, which ironically landed her in jail. She had little trouble escaping, but now exists as a half-crazed fallen wandering the streets of LA with little memory of her ancient and mortal past, and an ever-increasing burden of Torment. She only knows one thing — the name “Harut” slips across her lips in a whisper every quiet moment she finds, and she seeks this mysterious demon with a hellbound passion, leaving a trail of bodies in her wake. She has yet to encounter other fallen, but that time will come shortly, and woe to them if they cannot direct her to Harut.

BORIS BONAVENTURA (KERETH’MA)

The Venture Gallery is a middle-class artisan’s delight. The store, part of a franchise found in countless malls across America, was the brain-child of Boris Bonaventura, an old-money Southern gentleman who thought that supplying America with eclectic (read: cookie-cutter) furnishings, artwork, and knick-knacks was a sure path to success. And he was right. By the age of 42, Bonaventura was a millionaire — who unfortunately led an empty and shallow life. One night, on the way to meet one of his many Ukrainian mistresses, Boris

was shot at an ATM, leaving his body comatose and fresh for Kereth’ma. Kereth’ma was a righteous war chief among the rebel angels, but his time in the Abyss left him feeling hateful and betrayed. Unfortunately, the life of Bonaventura wasn’t enough to temper Kereth’ma’s rage, and the circumstances of his death left a dark print upon Boris’ now fragmented persona. Kereth’ma, unwittingly a Ravener, finds the destruction of material goods personally satisfying, and seeks an outlet where he may be allowed to generate massive physical destruction.

HAROLD MARTIN (ERAZIL)

Erazil is a Cryptic gone mad. His desire to “know” information from other Fallen has lead him and his mortal bodies into countless confrontations with other — often more powerful — fallen, which has twice now resulted in the destruction of Erazil’s mortal flesh. He has now jumped into the body of a schizophrenic street person (Harold Martin), but he has unfortunately carried the memories of his last two vessels with him, leaving his mind a jumbled mess. He barely acts in accord with Cryptic ideals anymore — while he can still be found pursuing information about pre-history and about Lucifer with a dogged fortitude, he also performs erratic “miracles” about town on unsuspecting mortals. He heals, he hurts, he helps, he destroys. All creating a rather high profile that has attracted the ire of both the mortal and infernal authorities. Erazil has no concept of his own mortality, especially after switching bodies as many times as he already has, and as such is unlikely to act with any fear of physical harm.

TOMMY BELL (AZHI-DAHAKA)

Eleven-year-old Tommy Bell died in the hospital — pushed off the jungle gym by a brutish bully, he was effectively rendered a living, breathing vegetable. Azhi-Dahaka, the Mad Dragon of Zebul, took residence. Azhi-Dahaka, twisted in the by the fate of the world, was one of the angels who helped lay siege to the city of Zebul — and he was one of the leaders of the charge that left the Great Library a pile of char and ash. Azhi-Dahaka took hold of Tommy’s mortal shell, expecting to wield the child’s virility and slake his twisted thirst on the petty mortals who turned away from the gracious angels — but memories of a loving family, good grades, and a new puppy left Azhi-Dahaka’s eternal wrath shaken and uncertain. Now, Tommy has become the charismatic leader of the Evergreen Pines Elementary School’s sixth grade, excelling in his classes and ruling proudly as class president. The faith of other children is his domain, and he rarely thinks of the bloodshed he once caused. Though, from time to time, the urge arises in a wash of brutal memories....

ALONSO CARILLERO (CHEMOS)

An accident at 22 left Alonso Carillero bound to a wheelchair — and thirty years later, he swallowed a

handful of pain medication to commit suicide. Carillero, a professor at the Eastern Los Angeles Community College, spear-headed the Hispanic Literature program, but even the slow progress he made with students wasn't enough to stop the depression. The medication did not kill him — it left him in a coma, where he was found by Chemos, a Devil breaking from the Abyss. Chemos was a loyal proponent of the angel's rebellion, and served under Penemue the Watcher when she taught mankind the secrets of language and writing. But the Abyss left Chemos startled — where was Lucifer, the most loyal, the most regal? Suspicion had an eternity to ferment, and Chemos left the timeless prison believing that Lucifer had essentially "cut a deal" with the Creator. This most recent display leaves Chemos fearful that God is using Lucifer and that the Creator's notice has turned back to the world. Chemos enjoys his new mortal life and chooses not to involve himself in the politicking of demons, but now wonders if perhaps there is not a way to find the Lightbringer and turn him back to their cause. He has not yet left the wheelchair, but knows he could should the need arise.

SCOURGES

MURIEL WASHINGTON (KISHAR)

When Lucifer said it was correct to rebel against the Almighty, Kishar did not ask questions; she set aside her duties and followed. In the Iron Legion she found ample opportunities to use her lore both to heal and destroy.

Her ability to think fast on her feet and inspire her troops led to several battlefield promotions and personal commendations from the Morningstar himself. These latter served as badges of extreme pride for the Scourge commander, and she never doubted that what she did was right.

When she met the Defiler Ashur, it was like finding a portion of herself that had been missing. In the field the two often fought back-to-back, winning many victories. During the interludes they talked of how best to help Lucifer build this new world, or simply sat in silence enjoying each other's company, and for the first time Kishar knew fear. She became afraid that Ashur would be injured or destroyed. It gnawed at her every time her lover went into battle.

Then her worst fears came to pass. Ashur was captured and taken to Sagun, the prison city, to await final judgement by the Almighty. Without hesitation, Kishar flew to Sagun and under the cover of darkness slipped into its labyrinth. For two months she stalked the maze-like corridors until she at last freed her lover and brought him safely out of the city. Once they were safely into the mountains outside of the city, they pledged their love and swore never to permit them-



selves to part again. They sealed their bond by whispering their True Names into each other's ear.

The horror of the Ages that followed did nothing to shake their confidence in their cause, nor their love. Yet the fear still tormented Kishar whenever Ashur went into battle. When Lucifer ordered the Crimson and Iron Legions to subdue the excesses of the Silver and Ebon Legions, Kishar marched at the fore with Ashur by her side. They never indulged in wanton cruelty, yet they were implacable foes who marched against any and all once Lucifer ordered them into the fray.

Even in the endless damnation of the Abyss, Kishar and her lover never wavered in their absolute loyalty to the Morningstar. When other fallen questioned why the First Rebel was absent, the two would quietly insist that their lost leader strove, to free his loyal subjects, and when the Archdukes disappeared from the Abyss, the two confidently said it was proof positive of Lucifer's activities and intent.

It was perhaps the doubts of others that permitted Kishar and Ashur to remain so loyal; so long as they could fight, even if it was only with words, they did not have to doubt. So long as they could be together, they would calmly state, no madness could touch them.

When the cracks finally appeared in the Abyss, Kishar and Ashur left together. Their bond kept them close as they searched for hosts, but then they lost sight of each other, and the old fear seized Kishar's heart. It was this fear which resonated with Muriel Washington, an old black woman who had buried all five of her children and was about to lose the last of her grandchildren to AIDS.

As Muriel's spirit gave out and her body slumped to the floor of the decrepit apartment near the border of the Nickerson Garden Projects, Kishar took residence.

Quickly repairing the damage of sixty-four years that hard living had inflicted on the body, Kishar took set about looking for Ashur. She called his name but received only the barest whisper in response.

Then she saw what the world had become, and for the first time in her existence Kishar knew the gnawing feeling of doubt. Was this what Lucifer had wanted to build? Had she defied the Almighty for this? How was she to find Ashur in this chaos?

It took her two weeks, but Kishar did find her missing lover. He had ended up in the body of Jeff Black, a County Sheriff, but Ashur was now somehow different. He no longer had faith in Lucifer. He spoke of trying to make peace with the Almighty. He spoke about forgiveness. Kishar barely recognized him.

Forgiveness? They had done nothing wrong. They had obeyed the Morningstar. They had fought for what they believed in. They had not committed any of the atrocities so prevalent during the last days of the war. Why did they need forgiveness? It was the first argument the lovers had ever had, but it would not be the last.

Meanwhile Kishar had found the nascent infernal court of Los Angeles and presented herself. When Spentu Mainyu, the Devil who had been the court's tyrant and who had speciously promoted himself to the rank of Overlord, abdicated both rank and title without prompting, Kishar was touched by this loyalty which was now so absent in her lover. As a reward she elevated Spentu Mainyu from Fell Knight, which was his proper rank, to Lord and installed the wily Devil as head of the Ministry of Dragons.

In almost every way Kishar is the wrong fallen to be ruling Los Angeles. She is a brilliant battlefield commander, but useless as leader of an occupying army. Her talents lay in motivating warriors and planning attacks, not in pacifying politicians and arranging defenses. Kishar does not see the danger Lady Anat poses to the court. Likewise, it has never occurred to Kishar that Spentu Mainyu might be anything but loyal. Kishar sees the tensions between Vohu Mano and Aglibol, and she always sides with Aglibol because he is a Luciferan. She is creating divisions where she needs to be forging alliances, though she does not see this.

Image: Muriel Washington was short, black and indomitable. Barely five feet tall and weighing less than ninety pounds, she appears frail but Kishar's healing energies lend her body surprising suppleness and strength. Her brown eyes glint with intelligence, and she no longer needs glasses to see clearly. Anyone staring into her eyes now will be startled by youth found there. Her hair is white and her skin wrinkled, but something about her bespeaks an iron strength.

Roleplaying Hints: Kishar is a conflicted creature. She knows she is the wrong person for the job, but her

inflexible morality will not permit her to step aside to anyone of a lesser rank. She is haunted by the apparent betrayal of her lover, and though she fears the truth in what he says, she cannot admit, even to herself, that Lucifer might be wrong.

To those who are loyal to her, Kishar is tender and loving, but to those who are her enemies, she is truly a demon.

Nature: Caregiver

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Expression 1, Intuition 4, Leadership 3, Medicine 1, Religion 2, Stealth 3, Streetwise 3

Backgrounds: Eminence 2, Legacy 3, Pacts 2, Paragon 2

Willpower: 8

Faith: 7

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Awakenings

Lore: Awakenings 3, Firmament 2, Humanity 3

JASON KIM (VRITRAN)

With loving care, Vritran watched the first humans marvel at the wonders of the Garden, but his heart stung that the two did not seem to understand the truest depths of what they were witnessing. He longed to reveal himself to them and demonstrate in detail the gifts surrounding them, but the Almighty had forbidden such interaction, so Vritran contented himself with just being close to what he considered to be his most beloved creations.

Then Ahrimal spoke of his vision of disaster. At once, Vritran knew he must act. It would be worse to do nothing, he thought, and watch disaster than to inadvertently cause disaster by acting through love. After all, he thought, nothing evil could truly spring from pure love. It was a decision that would haunt him for aeons to come.

Vritran joined the rebellion, and enraged as he was by the harshness of the Almighty's punishment, he could not bring himself to fight his former brethren, instead becoming a scout in service to the Silver Legion. In this capacity Vritran quickly distinguished himself. He moved with the winds, bringing hope to those soldiers of Lucifer he came across and accurate information about the troops of the enemy.

As the war grew more and more horrific Vritran found himself questioning the propriety of the war. Could he have been wrong? No, he concluded, he'd followed the Morningstar, and the First Rebel would ensure that all would be well. His hopes were finally dashed when the Great Experiment fell prey to the corruption of the nephilim. In the time that followed, Vritran wandered aimlessly, dispirited and almost dead.

In the end, eternal exile from the ruins of Eden seemed almost a blessing rather than a curse.

In the timeless eternity of the Abyss, many wondered why Lucifer was not among their number or why his Archdukes had disappeared, but Vritran did not care. He knew Lucifer had acted correctly and would continue to do so, and he knew that the true blame for these outrages lay at the feet of Ahrimal, the Fiend who had foreseen the disaster but interpreted it so tragically.

As the factions grew more vocal and polarized, Vritran declared for the Luciferans and raged against the Cryptics, who dared to pretend that Ahrimal had behaved innocently and suggested that it was Lucifer's motives that were suspect.

When the walls of the Abyss cracked, Vritran charged them and flung himself back into the mortal world where he found Robin Jang. The Korean shopowner was being robbed and beaten for the third time by some neighborhood gangbangers. As his soul slipped from his battered body, Vritran assumed control, and the gentle Scourge who, in all the years of the war, had never taken a single life, ripped the attackers into pieces. When a young woman who'd been hiding in the back tried to make a break for freedom the demon set upon her as well, lost in the frenzy of bloodletting.

Finally the red haze cleared and Vritran stood amid the remains of six human bodies. Jang's hatred for his attackers had put the seal on Vritran's madness. Where other fallen found themselves experiencing the gentler emotions of humanity, Vritran was stained with the worst. The maddened Scourge set fire to the store and slipped away. Jang's family believes that he died during the robbery, and in a sense they are right.

With only the money from the liquor store's till, Vritran would not have survived long before committing

more crimes, but he was found by Chenrezig and contacted by Spentu Mainyu. The clever Devil knew of Vritran and tailored his pitch appropriately. He let Vritran rail against the Almighty and humanity for hours. Then Spentu Mainyu made a small suggestion.

Why not harness the power, the faith, of these wayward humans? Surely that is what Lucifer had been attempting during the Age of Babel, and if that is what the Morningstar wanted, was it not Vritran's duty to see that mission completed? If Vritran was willing to use his lore as Spentu Mainyu directed him, then the Devil could assure him that their plan would succeed. That is how the Faustian, posing as a Luciferan, recruited a Scourge into his service.

Spentu Mainyu had established some inroads into the television networks by this time, but the demands of running the city were hindering him from actively pursuing his goals. So he placed Vritran in charge of his pet project, knowing that the Scourge's lore would be more attractive to the health-obsessed studio executives, and Vritran has proved surprisingly effective in his role.

The problem is that Vritran loves humanity. Not the people who live on the earth now, but an idealized version of people who walked in Eden. The people walking the earth now are a grotesque parody of true man, an abomination like the nephilim, and as such they deserve to be destroyed — once they have been bled of their faith. Vritran may have declared for the Luciferans, but his philosophy is more that of a Ravener.

When Anat was establishing her Blood Court, she was initially resistant to appointing the Ministry of Dust, but once her eyes were opened to the possibilities for mayhem and Faith that mankind offered, she quickly adopted Spentu Mainyu's suggestion to offer the position of senior minister to Vritran.

Image: Robin Jang is a handsome young man in his twenties, lean and fit from years of sports and hard work at the family store. His hands and upper chest bear numerous scars from the three robberies he was victim of.

In bearing, Vritran is alternately loud and overbearing or shy and retiring. He has a slight accent that most people do not notice at first. He tends to speak in hushed tones, as though sharing some great secret, even when he is merely making conversation.

Roleplaying Hints: Vritran trusts nobody but Spentu Mainyu, and so talks with very few. However, he is becoming fond of Anat. Vritran in his own lair or in an intimate setting leans in close to talk and tends to whisper, but in public he is loud and boisterous, telling bawdy jokes and shaking hands or kissing cheeks.

His family thinks Robin Jang is dead. This has not yet been a problem for Vritran because he keeps himself well out of the spotlight, but if his family or an old friend should ever catch sight of him, life would become very challenging.



Nature: Fanatic

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Computer 2, Dodge 3, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Law 1, Medicine 1, Melee 2, Streetwise 2, Stealth 1

Backgrounds: Legacy 2, Pacts 1, Paragon 1, Resources 1

Willpower: 8

Faith: 8

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Winds

Lore: Winds 3, Awakenings 2, Fundament 2, Humanity 1

MINOR PLAYERS

BOB JOHNSON (IRUSH'BAL)

Bob Johnson hired an au pair from Ireland to look after his two children while he and his wife worked, but Johnson was a tyrant of an employer who enjoyed taking out the stresses of his job on the young girl living under his roof. One night after Johnson became drunk and made several abusive comments about the au pair's shyness and weight problems, the girl tried to take her own life with an overdose of sleeping pills.

Irush'bal felt a sympathy for this terrible loneliness and possessed the comatose girl. Once filled with her memories, Irush'bal became outraged at Johnson's careless cruelty, but at the same time Irush'bal coveted Johnson's wealth and influence. Deciding to kill two birds with one stone, Irush'bal poisoned Mr. Johnson's Scotch and waited. When the odious employer drank the poisoned liquor, Irush'bal changed bodies and disposed of the girl's body.

Ironically it was the wife who reported the girl missing and sent the police in action. The investigation has turned up nothing so far, but Mr. Johnson remains the prime suspect in foul play. In the mean time Mr. Johnson continues to run his by-appointment-only book store which specializes in ancient manuscripts.

By nature Irush'bal is a Cryptic, rare for the normally conservative or compassionate Scourges, but not completely surprising in Irush'bal's case. During the war Irush'bal was a potent healer working for the Ebon Legion, and his primary duty was researching new ways of restoring health on a massive scale, which meant more contemplation and philosophizing than was normal for the Second House.

Currently Irush'bal is working for Chenrezig by searching for remnants of any lost knowledge from the ages before the imprisonment, or portions thereof. He has also been brought to the attention of Al-Lat, and

though not yet recruited into the Cryptic plan to establish control of Los Angeles, he is aware of more of these plans than the average fallen.

Willpower: 8

Faith: 6

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Awakenings

Lore: Awakenings 2, Firmament 1, Winds 1

ISAIAH LINCOLN (KSHITIGARBHA)

Isaiah Lincoln was an enormous man. Standing close to 6'8" and weighing more than three hundred fifty pounds, Isaiah was a true gentle giant. In many ways he was afraid of the normal-sized people around him because they seemed so fragile, like an adult playing with little children might be. As a bouncer he rarely needed to use physical force to get people to comply with his orders. A stern glare and an ominous silence was usually sufficient to encourage all but the most truculent trouble-maker take his grievance elsewhere.

In high school Isaiah demonstrated great promise as a football player, and was widely respected and loved for his prowess. During his junior year universities were already approaching him with offers to join their team, and life could not have been better for the enormous youth from South Central. Then he ruptured two discs in his lower back during a game, and just like that his sports career was over. The pain of the injury and the despair of being abandoned by those he had thought were his friends led to Isaiah becoming addicted to painkillers.

This habit followed him into his adult years, even as a bouncer. Floating in the haze of a drug-induced euphoria, Isaiah's soul became unbound from his body, and Kshitigarbha took his place. After years of madness, this Scourge found himself feeling compassion for this soul whose only mistake was trying too hard to do what others wanted of him. Kshitigarbha is a classic example of how the gentler aspects of humanity can soften the hatred that the Abyss has ground into the fallen.

Where he had once been a Luciferan, Kshitigarbha now found himself thinking along the lines of Vohu Mano as Reconciler. Indeed Isaiah now works for the Ministry of Dust for the infernal court of Los Angeles as a lieutenant to Vohu Mano, and on more than one occasion the enormous black man has saved the life of his commander from one of Aglibol's assaults. As a result, Kshitigarbha has recently become the primary target of Aglibol's attacks.

Willpower: 5

Faith: 7

Torment: 5

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Awakenings

Lore: Awakenings 3, Wind 2, Fundament 3

ANDREW LAU (INZIBAEL)

Andrew Lau's family has lived in America since just before the turn of the twentieth century, and as such Andrew grew up thoroughly westernized. A man trapped between two worlds and a part of neither, he found his only relief in the skies, and acquired his pilot's license before he could drive a car. Every spare moment he spent high above the troubles of the world. Andrew looked into joining the Air Force but ironically was too tall to become a fighter pilot.

One night as he was driving home from work on a wet freeway Andrew lost control of his car and collided with a concrete embankment. He did not die but suffered severe brain damage. It was in that state which Inzibael found him. The catatonic state of his host allowed the Scourge time to slowly adapt to and understand the way the world has changed during his imprisonment.

When he did come back to life Inzibael resumed the proprietorship of the White Tiger Curio shop much to the delight of his family who thanked Buddha and burned incense that their eldest son was restored to them. They had no idea how profoundly Andrew had changed. Inzibael also renewed Andrew's pilot's license and spends as much time as he can back in his native air.

A great shock awaited Inzibael when he first entered the White Tiger, for in the back room something resonated powerfully with Celestial energy. Deep in the back room the Scourge found a sword that was an ancient family heirloom. He has not yet worked up the courage to unsheathe the weapon, a Chinese broadsword, because the family legend speaks of horrors accompanying the freeing of the blade, so Inzibael has hidden the sword while he attempts to discern its true function.

Politically, Inzibael is undecided and broadly courted. He is leaning towards the Reconcilers because

of the extreme love he feels for his family. The love, he finds himself reasoning, must be reminiscent of the holy love once shared between the Almighty, his angels and mankind, but the rabid determination of Vohu Mano keeps Inzibael from committing wholeheartedly. If he does not choose to join the Reconcilers, he will almost certainly follow his Baroness and become a Luciferan. The image of Lucifer in the sky over Los Angeles almost convinced him to resume his old loyalties, but in the wake of the Morningstar's second disappearance the demon's doubts returned full force.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 5

Torment: 6

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Winds

Lore: Winds 3, Fundament 3, Humanity 1

BIT PLAYERS**FRIEDRICH MACE (RESHEPH)**

Resheph was once a shepherd of enlightenment when it came to the human herd, protecting them every step of the way from dangerous elements of the unkempt world, but when humans learned to murder each other, it was too much and Resheph quickly grew into a Ravener disdainful of mortals. Now he resides in the body of Friedrich Mace, a documentary film-maker with perverse tastes who suffered brain damage in a botched act of auto-erotic asphyxiation. Resheph, in Mace, delights in the technology of film and believes that humans these days are far more vulnerable and weak than their ancient forbears. Resheph combines these two elements and has begun an elusive career as a snuff filmmaker, capturing torture and murder on film with an "Artistic Eye." This has brought him to the attention of the Lord of Murder, who in turn captured Resheph's attention by calling out syllables of the Scourge's True Name. For all his Torment and his cruel peccadilloes, Resheph is a needy fallen, and prefers not to exist alone. Since he loathes humanity so deeply, he tends to associate with (read: "cling to") newer fallen just so he doesn't have to be alone. If he can bring any demons into his brutal schemes, he will.

BRICK HOWE (SRAOSHA)

Brick didn't have much going for him. Slacker, stoner, surfer, but by the age of 25, he was broke, addicted, and totally lost. Salvation came, oddly enough, when he drowned after being sucked into the ocean by a cruel undertow, and his body was left vacant for Sraosha, a Scourge who was called to Brick's flesh with the memory of a wasted life. Sraosha is rather vocal about humanity's graces as well as the demon's foolishness, and makes a habit of frequenting homeless shelters, drug clinics and other epicenters of



JEWEL WANG-MU (KUMIHO)

Heroin killed Jewel's boyfriend, a Korean gangbanger called Ken Fong, and one year later, it left her spent in mind and body. When Kumiho — a demon who suffered imprisonment *before* the Abyss in the prison city of Sagun — entered Jewel's body, she recognized the distance the girl had created between her and her family, and now seeks to repair all rifts between her and Jewel's loved ones. She also reaches out to any new fallen who enter the city, offering assistance and information while encouraging them to embrace the lives of their mortal hosts and fix whatever was broken. Only through this act, she claims, can humanity be once again elevated to the perfect creatures they should've been all along. However, Kumiho has been having nightmares that have been distracting her lately — her dreams tell her of a Devil called Semyazha who is coming to the Valley of Many Smokes with a "jury" who will determine the fate of the world. Kumiho doesn't recognize the name, but she knows that every dream inches her Torment ever greater. She has yet to mention this to any other fallen, but she is likely to soon.

"DOMINO" (AKA MANAH)

Aka Manah spreads his one true love amongst the debauched denizens of Los Angeles — *sexually-transmitted diseases*. Aka Manah loves humans — loves the way they walk, loves the way they move, and loves the way they suffer and die under diseases of lust and love. This high-Torment being found the body of a boyish male prostitute known on the street as "Domino," and now relishes in the indulgences of flesh (and all the sickness that can come with them). Domino has been courted by thralls of the Lord of Murder, but oddly enough doesn't feel that what he does is precisely "murder" and has so far been avoiding making any deals with the Earthbound servants. Recently, Aka Manah has actually collected a small cult of ex-prostitutes (all infected by various sexual afflictions) to live with him in his garage apartment in Torrence. Their Faith is what feeds him as he extends their lives, but also their suffering.

ALICE CARTWELL (JINUNSHA)

Alice died peacefully in her sleep, and that memory is one of the key mortal recollections that soothes Jinunsha's tormented mind. The nature of peacefully dying revisits the demon whenever things seem strange, or out-of-control, and it has caused this Scourge to adopt a new undertaking — "Angel of Mercy" killings. Alice was once a nurse at several regional hospitals, and Jinunsha used the human's connections within the medical community to obtain a job at a local elderly care nursing home, where the demon is able to pursue the delight of delivering a peaceful death unto those who suffer. More than that, however, Jinunsha takes a

the "down-and-out." There he espouses theories of love and healing and also tells tales of the dawn of Time as much as he can remember it. Unfortunately, he's something of a lunatic legend among charity cases, and has attracted attention from both courts (as well as demon-hunters) due to his strident mission to aid and inform LA's helpless. Those who know Brick say that his good luck in avoiding trouble will wear thin sooner than later, but so far this hasn't proven particularly true.

JUAN ALEJANDRO (DYABHAN)

One of Dyabhan's key mortal memories from the body of Juan Alejandro was saving his thirteen-year-old brother, Jorge, from a hail of bullets fired by a Green-Lighter gang member — as Juan lingered at death's door in a hospital bed, Dyabhan took hold, and the honor and power intrinsic in saving his little brother staved off the demon's Abyssal Torment. Now Dyabhan seeks to reclaim as much of that as possible by acting as a Guardian Angel against those fallen (Raveners and Faustians, mostly) who seek to harm young and innocent mortals. He also believes that the fallen are in control of many of the Hispanic gangs (including the Surenos and the Green-Lighters), and will brashly stand in the way of any demon who attempts to subvert or enthrall a child or adolescent via these gangs. The irony is, Dyabhan's one and only thrall is Juan's little brother, Jorge — he feels that he can trust himself, and the only way to protect the teenager is by granting the boy the favors that thralldom allows. In the bargain, Dyabhan has access to all the Faith supplied from a little brother to his big.

NAADIRA AWAD (BELET-IRI)

Born in Syria, raised in Turkey, Naadira was brought to America (Pittsburgh) in her early teens to study "in freedom." She was a lonely child, excelled in school, and her family suffered constant racial rebukes due to the pervasive prejudice towards those of Middle Eastern descent. She attended school at UCLA, and gained a degree in biochemistry — and on the evening after her graduation, she was raped and beaten by a gang of Harvesters in what was termed "a racial incident" by the news media. The demon Belet-Iri, a private and reclusive Cryptic, entered the flesh and was delighted to discover a new wealth of knowledge cultivated by humankind over the centuries — science. She used Naadira's science background to research the biochemical and genetic structures of DNA (specifically human) to find the secret history of man (and why the angels were punished) hidden within this coded organic scripture. Naadira finds humans fascinating, and spends as much time among them as possible, experiencing their ways. She avoids other fallen as much as possible, though is being constantly monitored by other Cryptics.

rather protective role over the elderly under her care, and guards them from abuses from the medical staff and aids them in circumventing health care financial issues. Jinunsha studies many Eastern philosophies (recently she has begun reading *Analects of Confucious*). Alice was also afflicted by polio as a child, and as such has one leg that is significantly shorter than the other.

M. MICHAEL HARRINGTON III (TZADIK NISTAR)

The Scourge Tzadik Nistar felt that, by taking their teachers away from them, the Creator was really punishing humankind as much as he was punishing the angels. Putting the rebels in the Abyss was akin to stealing the very spark of life from the mortal souls that populated the world, and Tzadik's time in the Abyss was a tortuous experience as he felt the unguided humans go further down paths of depredation, disease, and destruction. He wept and went mad, not even realizing that he had escaped until he was already into the sorrow-filled body of M. Michael Harrington III, a rich Daddy's boy who lost his father, his sister, and himself to various cancers. Suddenly his Torment was tempered, and Tzadik-as-Harrington began sitting with cancer patients, mentally drawing conclusions between the nature of cancer (rebel cells) and the nature of the fallen (rebel angels). He feels that the Rebellion was, while perhaps necessary, a grossly misguided event and now believes that the fallen owe humans severe reparations. Unfortunately, his Torment occasionally lashes out and he unknowingly spreads cancer to unwitting victims.

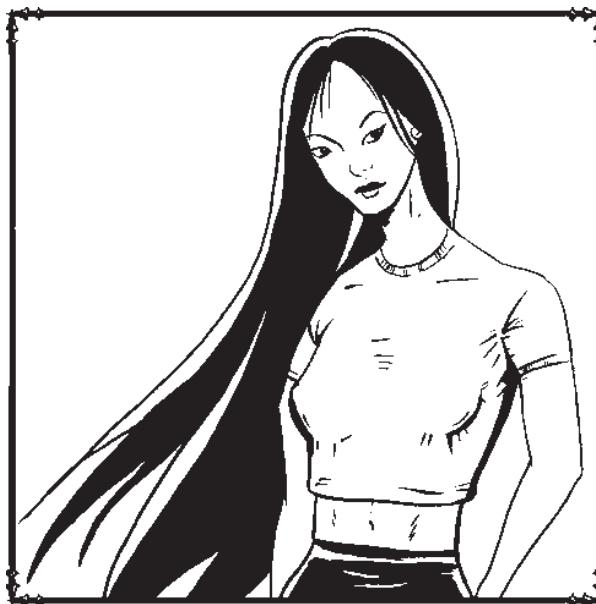
MALEFACTORS

XIAO YUEN (AL-LAT)

Like so many Malefactors, Al-Lat was drawn to Lucifer's side not for philosophical reasons but by a need to help humankind understand the wonders presented them. She wanted to explain how to use the marvelous tools she and her sisters had created. She wanted humans to love and understand her, not fear her. Eager to be freed of the restrictions placed on her by the Almighty, Al-Lat joined Lucifer without hesitation.

The first day was all she hoped it would be. Humanity marveled at the creations of the Third House and adapted quickly to the Malefactors' gifts. At last, the Malefactors felt truly appreciated. Then came the punishments from Heaven. Al-Lat could not believe that the Almighty could be so cruel. Her few moments of joy in the wake of the fall were cruelly swept away.

In the ages that followed Al-Lat found the passion that had moved her to join the rebel cause waning. She felt the horror of Caine's crime. She witnessed the atrocities that would become commonplace among her fellow angels. The final heartbreak was the failure of the Age of Babel.



Disillusioned before being cast into the Abyss, Al-Lat desperately wanted to understand how everything went so wrong. She soon found a home with the Cryptics.

Gripontel, who helped run the faction, became an especially fast friend. The two tried to prop up each other's sanity during the endless monotony of the Abyss. Al-Lat escaped the Abyss before her friend but knew Gripontel would soon be following.

Returning to the mortal world, Al-Lat felt an attraction to Xiao Yuen, a young woman of Chinese descent who had been sold into virtual slavery by her parents in return for her escape from China. Cast into a foreign world with a foreign tongue and foreign customs, Xiao had only her husband as a connection, but he did not speak Mandarin, only Cantonese. Her isolation was total. Xiao's husband was a social misfit who abused his bride physically and sexually, and Xiao had no means for escape except suicide. So Xiao drank a bottle of rat poison and closed her eyes, ready to die.

Al-Lat opened them. The shock of what the world had become dazzled her, and in this state of bewilderment Xiao's husband came to sate his nightly lust. Al-Lat revealed herself to him and did not stop tearing at the body until it was no longer recognizable as human. Then she spent several days watching the television trying to acclimate herself and learn a little English before setting off in search of Gripontel.

It took her a month to find him, but eventually she did, joining Gripontel in the city of Atlanta. The Cryptics were working hard to control all cities who served as major transport hubs, like Atlanta, New York, Chicago and Dallas. The leaders wanted to form an expedition to Los Angeles, and Al-Lat's timely arrival made her a logical choice.

Placed in charge of Lady Nasu and Lord Chenrezig, Al-Lat was sent to the City of Angels. Shortly after her arrival she discovered Fell Knight Guanli and recruited him into the expedition. Sizing up the situation, Al-Lat decided to help Spentu Mainyu establish his infernal court, but knew she needed to keep a careful eye on the crafty Devil, so she ordered Chenrezig to accept the senior position in the court's Ministry of Eagles.

Carefully, Al-Lat scouted the Tri-County Area, developing an encyclopedic knowledge of the area and its inhabitants. Two pieces of information soon troubled her. One was the arrival of Baal's lover, Anat, but she managed to deal with that, via Spentu Mainyu, by having Nasu appointed to the head of the Blood Court's Eagle Ministry. More disturbing was the knowledge that Lucifer himself walked the streets of Los Angeles. There was no hint of why he was there, only the certain knowledge that he was present.

Al-Lat sent that information back to Gripontel, and without waiting for orders she set about trying to learn more of the Morningstar's activities, both present and past. Gripontel's response was all she might have expected. Yet as time passed Al-Lat could discover nothing. Lucifer was hiding his tracks too well.

Studying the storm she saw looming on the horizon, Al-Lat decided that to take control of a city about to explode was foolish, and she adopted a plan much like Spentu Mainyu's — wait and let someone else endure the indignity of losing control of the city. When Devil's Night, erupted Al-Lat felt justified in her choice.

Image: Al-Lat possesses the body of a seventeen year old Chinese girl. She is slender and short, with delicate features and long, waist-length black hair. Her English is broken and heavily accented, but she can read and write the language with greater fluency. The demon is uncomfortable in large crowds, preferring solitude to the worrisome press of human companionship.

Roleplaying Hints: Knowledge is paramount to Al-Lat. She wants to understand why and where the Rebellion went wrong. She wants to understand what has happened to the world. She wants to understand English. She wants to understand what the Almighty meant by setting all these actions in motion. The pursuit of these questions occupies Al-Lat's every waking moment. It also is her blind spot because she does not understand that some fallen not only do not want to understand why, they resent her attempts to find out.

Nature: Architect

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 1, Crafts 2, Dodge 3, Etiquette 1, Expression 2, Intuition 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Backgrounds: Pacts 2, Paragon 3, Legacy 4

Willpower: 7

Faith: 8

Torment: 5

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Forge

Lore: Forge 3, Earth 2, Paths 1

JEREMIAH AZEVEDO (GUANLI)

Like so many other Malefactors Guanli served the Dark Host by constructing weapons, and his unusual talent for manipulating his lore caused Guanli, who had never seen a battle first hand to be elevated to the rank of Fell Knight. Many of the finest weapons wielded by the Lucifer's Archdukes and Dukes were constructed by Guanli in the forges beneath Taba'et.

It may be that the famed smith joined Lucifer's side solely for the opportunity to create new weapons and experiment with new ways of infusing matter with Faith. As a member of the Silver Legion posted to Taba'et, Guanli's penchant for clinical, heartless experimentation was one of the prime reasons that watchtower became synonymous with cruelty and horror. Many of the abominations that emerged from that dreadful citadel sprang first from Guanli's mind and bore the mark of his hands.

Because he spent his time in his laboratories underneath Taba'et interacting with none but his victims, none of the fallen fully appreciated the depths of madness to which Guanli had fallen. When he did exit his laboratory and communicate with the outside world, his calm, slow speech was so convincing that all failed to associate this rational, even brilliant Malefactor with the monstrosities that were born from his skills, and his weapons were still heavily sought after.

Guanli joined a cause he believed was right, and for this the Almighty leveled a terrible curse upon him (Guanli tends to see every action as a personal slight against himself and overlooks the bigger picture). Then Guanli obeyed the orders of Lucifer to create weapons for the Dark Host, and as a reward his workshops were destroyed by the Crimson and Iron Legions. When he emerged from the Abyss, Guanli was powerfully offended that humankind had forgotten his numerous sacrifices.

Sergeant Jeremiah Azevedo, who worked for the LAPD as weapons trainer, had testified against his fellow officers in a case of police corruption, but the case was thrown out due to the political maneuvering of the Chief of Police. This left Sargent Azevedo as an outcast who had violated the Code of Silence that pervaded the LAPD. He could not be legally fired, but his fellow officers so ostracized him that he finally sank into a self-destructive cycle of alcohol and painkillers to spare himself the pain of isolation.

This body of loneliness and resentment caught Guanli's attention as he fought the pull of the Abyss.



The isolation Azevedo had been experiencing eased Guanli's acclimatization into this unfamiliar mortal world. During this period, he was approached by Al-Lat and recruited into a Cryptic expedition to Los Angeles. Guanli joined to increase his understanding of this new world and how the fallen could interact with it, but tensions with Al-Lat quickly emerged.

Al-Lat wanted Guanli to join the newly-formed infernal court as head of the Ministry of Lions, but Guanli wanted to spend his time figuring out new ways of harvesting Faith and manipulating the new materials like steel, concrete and silicon. To serve as head of a Ministry would use up valuable time that Guanli wanted to use for other purposes. However, Al-Lat was adamant, so Guanli became Lord General of the Ministry of the Lion for the Infernal Court of Los Angeles.

Galled by this high-handed treatment, Guanli became the perfect convert for Manishtusu, who learned of his dissatisfaction through Lady Nasu, and the Lord of Murder was quick to capitalize on the opportunity. Guanli traveled into the Nickerson Garden Projects to meet with the Earthbound. The unhappy Malefactor did opt to align himself with the Earthbound, but of more significance is the accidental meeting that followed. As Guanli was leaving, he encountered Ravana.

The two fell to talking, and Guanli shared with her his frustration over his inability to experiment properly and lack of materials, and Ravana told him about her experiments with killing fallen hosts and absorbing their power. The idea excited Guanli who had never considered such a shortcut to increasing his stock of knowledge and power.

Without delay, the two swung into action searching for newly arrived fallen. They would then ambush newcomers and working together absorbed their

essence and lore. By the time Lucifer revealed himself during the riots, the pair had killed and no less than absorbed eight fallen.

Because both were Lord Generals of their respective courts, they found their workload greatly reduced. The two fed each other information concerning the other's court activities and staged raids on each other that looked good to their respective leaders but inflicted little actual damage. As these months of close interaction progressed the two fallen became lovers.

In the chaos of Devil's Night the two demons went wild, killing nine humans and destroying the host bodies of two more fallen. This frenzy (and their spiraling Torment) has left them hungry for more. As the city slowly returns to a semblance of sanity following the Devil's Night riots, both demons struggle to contain their lust for violence and maintain their charade of rivalry, but the more time passes the harder their appetites are to control.

Image: Average in height, stocky and in perfect physical condition, Azevedo was an ideal instructor for the physically intense training that the LAPD subject their cadets to. Portuguese by descent, Azevedo speaks Portuguese, Spanish and English fluently.

Roleplaying Hints: Guanli is selfish, but subtly so. He talks calmly and rationally, careful to make eye contact, and is skilled at recognizing when he is making people uncomfortable. Whenever he sees the telltale signs of this discomfort, Guanli will change whatever he is saying to put whomever he is talking to at ease, or to mitigate the damage done by his words. Mainly though, the Malefactor tries to speak as little as possible.

His biggest flaw is his inability to distance himself. Every comment he hears he assumes is actually a comment about himself, and as such almost anyone who talks around Guanli inadvertently offends the quiet weapon smith. The biggest part of his love for Ravana is having found someone with whom he can talk openly and have no fear of judgement or offending. Their love is not a healthy one, and will probably end badly, especially once their quiet collusion is revealed to their respective lords.

Nature: Architect

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Computer 1, Crafts 3, Dodge 3, Firearms 2, Intimidation 3, Intuition 1, Investigation 3, Law 2, Medicine 1, Melee 3, Politics 1, Research 3, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Legacy 3, Paragon 2, Eminence 3

Willpower: 9

Faith: 10

Torment: 9**Apocalyptic Form:** The Visage of the Forge**Lore:** Forge 5, Earth 4, Paths 4, Flame 2, Fundament 3, Humanity 2

MINOR PLAYERS

MANUEL GARCIA (MANUMAN)

Manuel Garcia worked for years as a glassblower. He made enough to barely support his family but not enough to keep his mistresses. In the end he chose to take his skill on the road, so that he could enjoy an endless procession of lovers. While he is not especially charming, Garcia relied on the beauty of his craft to enchant women, and made gifts of his beautiful glass roses to women who caught his eye. He enjoyed more success than one would expect.

One of the women he took to bed infected him with AIDS, and the harshness of life on the road meant he soon succumbed to a nasty dose of influenza. He could not afford to see a doctor, so his condition was never diagnosed. Hanuman found Garcia clinging to life in a dingy hotel room and seized his weakened body for his own.

Rather than deal with the confusion of life on the road, Hanuman decided to set up shop in the El Mercado Market, where he is doing a booming business. The talent Hanuman shows for the glassblowing is making him very well known locally, and people will come from all over the Tri-County Area to see and purchase his creations. Yet this fame has a negative aspect that Hanuman is not yet aware of: Garcia never knew he had AIDS. Even if he had known, there is no evidence to suggest he would have changed his behavior — and before he died he slept with a number of women, spreading the disease. There might be some bitter women who wish to revenge themselves on the man who has effectively killed them.

Hanuman can see the potential in humanity's Faith. Like Spentu Mainyu he would like to harness it, but his plans are not as elaborate or even thought out yet. Still Hanuman has declared for the Faustians yet quietly. In the Court, Hanuman works for Vohu Mano in the Mortal Ministry constructing tools for the Reconciler that help keep the Court informed of humanity's activities.

Willpower: 6**Faith:** 5**Torment:** 6**Apocalyptic Form:** The Visage of the Earth**Lore:** Earth 2, Forge 2, Paths 1

NATHANIEL HIDALGO (EBISU)

Nathaniel Hidalgo spent his life organizing things. In school clubs he was always the secretary. At home he always obeyed a carefully constructed plan, just like his parent's did. His clothes and grooming were always

impeccable. Yet some part of his mind longed for the artistic, to be wild and emotional. This conflict led him into the career as a curator, until he was in charge of several smaller galleries around Pasadena, including the one located in the Huntington Library.

In his capacity Nathaniel excelled. His galleries were always neat and clearly labeled, much like the rest of his life. Yet in this immaculate, almost sterile, life there was no passion. Nathaniel was alone, and ill-equipped for meeting new people. Eventually in desperation he tried a dating service, but his luck proved bad. The woman the service suggested for him was a con artist and already married. Her modus operandi was to meet her target at a bar, seduce him back to a room where her husband was waiting and at an opportune moment the husband would spring out. In the following confusion the mark would be taken for everything he had on him, but Nathaniel did not give in like many shocked and lonely men did — instead, the quiet, orderly man tried to fight back. This enraged the husband, who beat Nathaniel nearly to death, but as the couple stood there arguing over what the man had done, Ebisu took possession of Nathaniel's body. The sight of Nathaniel's bloody form rising to its feet sent the pair screaming into the night.

Through his host's job with the Huntington Library, Ebisu quickly crossed paths with Aglibol and was quickly appointed as a deputy minister of the Eagle Ministry. Since that time he has used Nathaniel's seniority to hire on two more fallen to the library staff and is busily searching for several more to solidify his control further.

With three fallen running the place, Huntington Library has become something of a sanctuary for the demons of the city. Aglibol, especially, uses the place as a staging area for his attacks on Vohu Mano's West Hollywood holdings. Ebisu is, like his Lord, Luciferan in speech but Ravener in his behavior.

Willpower: 7**Faith:** 6**Torment:** 5**Apocalyptic Form:** The Visage of the Paths**Lore:** Paths 2, Earth 2, Humanity 2

NASH ALHOMANY (MAZZI)

Nash Alhomany was a chemistry major studying at UCLA and originally from Jordan. His whole life centered around his scholastic pursuits. Every spare moment was spent in the lab or in his small apartment. He worked in the lab of a one-hour eyeglass store.

He died hunched over the microscope in that lab at the back of the store when a lunatic walked into the mall where his store was located and opened fire at random with an automatic rifle. Nash never even knew



he was dying. At that moment Hazzi was searching for a host, and found himself attracted to a man who was performing a highly detailed task.

Like many fallen, Hazzi at first made little attempt to stay within the confines of his mortal life. His first action upon possessing the body was to leave the store. During the war he had crafted a forge which could heat itself to any temperature and a token that could always locate the forge in the event it was captured or stolen. Hazzi's first thoughts were to regain his most precious possessions. After considerable effort Hazzi located the token amid the dust of the Olduvai gorge, and was en route to locating the forge when a pickpocket stole the token during a long layover at Los Angeles International Airport.

He has managed to track the thief to Pasadena, but lost the scent at the monthly flea market held in the parking lot of the Rose Bowl. So every month he returns there to resume the hunt. Until then he works for his fellow Faustian Spentu Mainyu by helping Vritran in the Ministry of Dust for the Blood Court of Los Angeles.

Hazzi manufactures artifacts for Vritran to use in luring human beings to become his thralls, and while the Scourge thinks that Hazzi is loyal to the Ministry, in fact Spentu Mainyu commands Hazzi. The cunning Devil uses the Malefactor to keep an eye on Vritran's activities, and in return Spentu Mainyu helps Hazzi to look for his stolen treasure.

Willpower: 7

Faith: 8

Torment: 5

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Forge

Lore: Forge 3, Earth 2, Fundament 2

BIT PLAYERS

BARRY ST. JAMES (ZERUBBABEL)

Few cab drivers will take fares into or out of South Central, but Barry St. James is an exception. The Jamaican native had no fear of the LA streets, and believed his passengers would give him the same respect he showed them. He was right 99% of the time — but the 1% of bad customers included a Eight Trey gangsta who shot him three times rather than pay a \$7.50 fare. St. James' death allowed the demon Zerubbabel access to the mortal world — and the Annunaki found this world of cars and streets very much to his liking.

Zerubbabel's lore makes him the perfect cab driver — he always knows the best route to the passenger's destination, and his cab is a faster and smoother ride than you'd believe possible. This is a small consolation to some of St. James' passengers, though — the ones who catch a cab while drunk, stoned or otherwise incapacitated. These mortals are liable to end up somewhere else — delivered by Zerubbabel to the camp of his master Enshagkushanna, there to become the vessel of a demon.

TINA COTRONEO (SIGIURNOTH)

It's rare to find a woman working in the field of special effects, but Tina Cotroneo has been building her career for more than forty years now. The old-school Cotroneo is a specialist in mechanical effects like pyrotechnics, squibs and monster makeup. Tina was always expert at her craft — but demand has been falling off for several years now, with directors preferring computer-generated effects.

Things are beginning to change, now that Tina has been possessed by the Malefactor Sigiurnoth. The Annunaki has found the world of special effects enthralling, and Tina's common-sense decency has pulled her away from the cause of Hell. Sigiurnoth's skills have only increased the excellence of Cotroneo's effects, and she's finding herself increasingly in demand for both TV and movie work. She's also beginning to attract thralls, in the form of stuntmen, effects designers and other film technicians, and hopes to assemble them into an effective force to fight against the power of the Infernal Court. This better happen soon — it's only a matter of time before the Court notices the upstart and takes action against her.

INDIRA GUNARATNAM (BEKHORATA)

The demon Bekhorata has only hazy memories now of the Age of Wrath — her mind is still foggy from the transition to the mortal world. Still, she feels convinced that she recognizes the Los Angeles landscape — and that a redoubt of weapons and relics is hidden somewhere under the city, a hiding place she created eons ago. If only she could remember where it is....

Bekhorata keeps in close contact with the earth of LA, thanks to her mortal form — she possesses the body

of Indira Gunaratnam, a middle-aged Indian woman who works as a gardener at Disneyworld. Every day, Indira works to keep the park beautiful — and feel for currents in the earth that might lead her to the lost cache. Bekhorata has inherited her host's love of the park, and brutally punishes anyone who 'violates' her sanctum — such as muggers, drug dealers, litterbugs and lovers trysting in secluded groves. Their bodies are buried deep, swallowed by the obedient earth — and Indira sows flowers over their secret graves, hoping that *this* is the day she finally remembers the location of the redoubt.

JENNA SQUIRES (HAD'ADEZUR)

Word is getting out around the Grover Cleveland high school in East LA — you can get away with anything in Jenna Squires' remedial math class. You can cut class, sell pot from your desk, *anything* — if you give Mrs. Squires her cut. That's because Jenna Squires died in a mugging not so long ago, and now serves as a vessel for the demon Had'adezur.

While Had'adezur was attracted to the prospect of teaching, she found math too abstract and human to hold her interest. But when she realized that many of her students were involved in gangs — that caught her attention. Had'adezur has struck a deal with these kids — do what you like, *and* get a C average, as long as you give Mrs. Squires a percentage of your business. The students are going for it — and telling their bosses about their accommodating teacher. That's just what Had'adezur wants. Why bother with children when you can attract adult thralls — and why teach remedial math when you can teach something more practical, like murder? A cult is slowly accruing around Room 317 at Grover Cleveland, and any teachers who suspect trouble have learned to mind their own business.

BORIS DURANOVIC (AHITHOPHEL)

Boris Duranovic never cared about what people did with the guns he sold — that wasn't his problem. If you had the money, he'd sell you a gun, no matter your record or your ID — and that's how he got busted by the ATF and lost his license to sell firearms. For a man who dealt in guns and death, it's ironic that Duranovic died from slipping in the shower and cracking his skull — at least, Ahithophel found it ironic when he possessed Boris' corpse moments later.

A rare Malefactor member of the Ravener faction, Ahithophel admires only one thing about human beings — the tools of destruction they've invented in this modern age. If humans want to buy weapons from him — and use them to kill each other — Ahithophel is happy to oblige. Now Duranovic sells illegal guns to any gangbanger who can pony up the cash. Ahithophel particularly enjoys it when warring gangs buy weapons from him — he encourages them to enter an arms race

of bigger, badder guns. And for the ultimate body count, he might sell you one of the experimental weapons he keeps under wraps for special occasions....

DAN STEGMAN (HAMATH-ZOBAH)

Hamath-zobah swam into the dying mind of Dan Stegman, attracted by the mortal's connection to architecture and building. The demon was bitterly disappointed to realize that his host was just a working-class bricklayer. Not only that, Stegman never actually *did* any work — he got paid, but never showed up on site! It took a little time before Hamath-zobah realized his host was really a Mafia thug that got kickbacks from the construction company, payment to the Mafia for an untroubled work site.

Hamath-zobah is still at the bottom of the pecking order — he's a minor player in the mob *and* in the Infernal Court. But he doesn't plan to let things stay that way for long. The Malefactor has made it known around the Court that he has mob connections — the way he colors it, Stegman sits on the right hand of the Don, and rules the streets of LA. Hamath-zobah hopes that he can leverage respect and power in the Court, then use that to gain power in the Mafia. But he's playing a dangerous game — if the demons of the Infernal Court realize he's trying to scam them, their punishment will make the Mafia look like amateurs.

MOTHER TONGUE (EVKORQUUTH)

Anyone on the body modification scene will tell you that Mother Tongue is the best tattoo artist in West Hollywood, maybe in all of Los Angeles. With a strong following in the gay, Goth and BDSM scenes, Mother Tongue has a long waiting list — and while she charges plenty for her work, it's always worth it. If you doubt it, just look at her — the 400-pound woman is covered in her own work, a giant walking billboard for her art.

But since her heart attack and possession by Evkorquuth, Mother Tongue's work has taken on a new dimension. Now her tattoos are marks of ownership, binding you to her will — but in return, the demon will give you your heart's desire. Your tattoo opens your senses to a new world of pleasure and pain, agony and ecstasy — and servitude to Mother Tongue is a small price to pay. Evkorquuth smiles to herself as she inscribes glyphs of power into the skin of her customers, and waits for them to return for further... modifications.

JACK FETCH (NANTOTHIJAH)

Jack Fetch is the hottest new wrestler in the Los Angeles Wrestling company, with a fan following that's unheard of for an independent promotion. Fans can't get enough of the 7' 2" powerhouse, and they love his 'demon prince' persona. It makes a change from when he was just John Rickhart, struggling wrestler and wannabe actor with a hormone imbalance. Rickhart hoped that his size

and ugly features could make him a career as a villain in movies, but Hollywood wasn't interested — and as a wrestler, his size wasn't enough to attract fans or a decent paycheck. When Rickhart finally committed suicide, Nantothijah took possession of his body, attracted by the wrestler's loneliness and pain.

Nantothijah set about making a legend for himself as a wrestler — an occupation that appealed to the Malefactor's warrior nature. Now he's a hot property — aided by evocations, he can perform astonishing high-flying moves and enthrall a whole stadium of fans. The owners of LAW have never been happier, and the major promotions are paying attention to Jack Fetch. And if anyone hears the rumors that Fetch's fans are becoming dangerously fanatical in their worship of the Warlock of Warfare, no one believes them. Not yet.

FiENDS

MIREILLE CALVET (ANAT)

Almost from her inception, Anat loved Baal. When that mighty Devil opted to defy the Almighty, Anat joined him. Every military action in which the Archduke engaged was carefully planned by Anat; her genius and his ferocity made for a nearly unstoppable force, and the pair raged through the Loyalists without mercy. To Anat these were the golden years, with a cause to believe in, an enemy to grapple with and her lover always by her side.

While other fallen confused themselves with philosophy, debates, or their own personal lusts, Anat remained focused. She served Baal, and Baal served her. Together they served Lucifer. It was all so simple. The confusion that blinded the other fallen made no sense to Anat. When forced into a debate, she would try to explain to the other



side how simple it really was, but no one wanted to listen. They had their own theories which they clung to with an obstinacy that reminder her of the Almighty and his unwillingness to listen to the pleas of his angels.

So it continued until the Abyss, and Lucifer's betrayal. To be defeated and punished both she and Baal could handle, but to have the Morningstar abandon them was a pain neither could bear. At first they tried to argue that all was well, that Lucifer was free and working to save his followers, but time passed. It passed so slowly. Minutes became years. Time crawled inevitably forward with no hope of change on the horizon.

Try as they might to maintain their ideals, Anat and Baal found themselves wondering what had become of Lucifer. This doubt gave way to suspicion. Had the Morningstar betrayed them? Had he led a Rebellion he knew would fail? It made sense. No creature had been closer to the Almighty than the Morningstar. No creature loved the Creator so purely as Lucifer had. If God had ordered him to, Lucifer would surely have done anything. Suspicion became certainty.

Lucifer had betrayed them.

They would endure this eternal hell alone. Thoughts of what they would do if ever they could lay their hands on the Betrayer filled the lovers' minds. They passed each eternal moment devising new and elaborate methods to torture the Betrayer, and others came to join in their litany of hate. This was the beginning of the Ravener Faction.

Then Baal and the other four Archdukes vanished. Anat went mad. The fallen fled from her fury as she raged against the nothingness. The fallen could not die, but Anat made their existence worse with her temper. Her anchor to sanity had been Baal, and with him gone her animosity spiraled out of control. The only information that reached her mind was when she heard that cracks had appeared in the walls of the Abyss. Forcing all out of her way, Anat charged the breach.

Mireille Calvet was a successful Parisian thief, specializing in seducing the gullible rich and then robbing their mansions. She was beautiful but not overwhelmingly so, yet she had an air of intrigue and sensuality that captured the imagination. However her luck ran out one night when a security guard caught her in the act and shot her.

Mireille's curiosity for the location of the house's safe and her hatred towards her killer caught Anat's attention as she streaked away from the Abyss. She possessed the empty shell. It took an hour to ensure that all within the house were dead as Anat explored the limits of her new frame. Then she called out to Baal. And he responded.

Moving quickly, Anat looted the house then went in search of Baal. She found him in the deserts of Iraq on what had once been Mount Saphon. Baal's thralls had already awokened the Earthbound, and Anat was just one more

sign that it was time to move towards the endgame. Baal had received word that the Betrayer had been sighted in Los Angeles. Since Anat was more mobile than Baal, she was dispatched to investigate because Baal did not trust the vassal who was already there who had not even been aware of Lucifer's presence. Anat chose not to contact Enshagkushanna, the untrustworthy vassal, but rather went to the City of Angels as a normal fallen to see if she could gain access to their network of information.

Once in Los Angeles, Anat was approached by Spentu Mainyu who had been the leader of the city until Kishar had arrived and demoted him. In many ways Kishar and Anat were similar. Both were highly skilled thinkers, Kishar as a battlefield commander and Anat as a strategist, but neither was particularly adept at political machinations. Both Scourge and Fiend were outclassed by the Devil in their midst.

The Blood Court was Spentu Mainyu's idea. Anat followed Spentu Mainyu's advice for three of the ministry posts: the Ministry of Eagles (Nasu), Ministry of Aurochs (Inana) the Ministry of Dust (Vritran). Before Spentu Mainyu could recommend a head for the Ministry of Lions Anat learned, through Enshagkushanna's networks, of the arrival of the Fell Knight Ravana. Anat remembered Ravana well and approached her with the position. Ravana accepted. With the Blood Court thus completed, Anat charged them all with one task: locate Lucifer.

All tried. They searched. They tapped every resource, but they could not find the Betrayer, until the night Lucifer manifested high in the sky above them. Anat seethed at the vision that hovered above her, yet even as she gathered her power to attack it, the angel vanished.

Again she charged the Blood Court to locate the Deceiver, and again they have proved unsuccessful. Tensions are mounting as Anat rages against her great enemy and rails against her Court for having failed her twice. She swears there will not be a third time.

Image: Blond hair, brown eyes, and immaculately groomed, Anat is more glamorous than beautiful. Her voice is husky and thickly accented. Her English is competent, but difficult to understand if she becomes passionate, as she does whenever she speaks of the Betrayer.

Roleplaying Hints: Anat's hatred of Lucifer and her love for Baal have left her entirely blind to the monster that her lover has become, and her obsession with punishing the Betrayer leads her to ever-greater heights of excess and cruelty. Soon she will be forced to make good her threats against the ministers of her court, and when that happens she will either be forced to draw upon Baal directly for support or leave herself vulnerable to accusations of weakness and incompetence.

Nature: Fanatic

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 1, Computer 1, Dodge 2, Expression 2, Firearms 2, Intimidation 2, Intuition 1, Politics 2, Research 2, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Backgrounds: Eminence 2, Pacts 3, Legacy 2, Resources 2

Willpower: 8

Faith: 7

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Light

Lore: Light 3, Patterns 2, Fundament 1

DANIEL GOPAL (CHENREZIG)

When the world was young, Chenrezig's dearest friend was Manishtusu. When the Great Debate raged, the two enjoyed spending their time arguing either side of the situation, but in their hearts they both chafed at the restriction set on them by the Almighty, so when Lucifer sent out his call, the two friends quickly answered.

God's punishment struck them both hard, but more so Manishtusu. As time passed, Chenrezig began to worry for his friend who seemed to pass a majority of his time arguing with himself. One day Manishtusu came to Chenrezig asking him to explore the possible lines of the future to see what he saw. Happy to oblige his friend Chenrezig cast his mind into the future.

It came back with a vision of hell. Monoliths of unnatural stone and glass towered over an enslaved humanity. The people fought each other, but there was no sign of God or the fallen. Its name seemed to mock Chenrezig. This nightmare took place in the City of Angels in a land of smoke and fire. Horrified, Chenrezig shared what he had seen with Manishtusu.

Afterwards, Manishtusu became more secretive and suspicious. By the time the fallen were cast into the



Abyss, Chenrezig could no longer recognize his humor-loving friend for the snarling savage he had become. In some ways it was a blessing when Manishtusu vanished from the Abyss shortly after the Archdukes did, although Chenrezig was slow to recognize this at the time.

Throughout his confinement questions plagued Chenrezig. What had happened to his friend? How could the Almighty suffer these things to happen to his creation? Was this all a part of the plan? Where did Lucifer's disappearance fit into all of this? By the time he escaped through the fractures in the walls of the Abyss, Chenrezig was a confirmed Cryptic.

As his essence sped across the material world, Chenrezig felt a human soul sympathetic to his own. He found Daniel Gopal, a biochemist from India who was visiting Atlanta to tour the Centers for Disease Control. Although only thirty, Daniel had just suffered a heart attack as he read through the presentation material for the next day. In the ordinary course of things Daniel might have survived but Chenrezig did not feel like waiting, and Daniel's life force was just weak enough for Chenrezig to knock free.

Once installed Chenrezig made no effort to resume Daniel's life. Instead the Fiend went in search of his fellow fallen, and found a coterie of Cryptics who were attempting to establish control over the city. The plan of the Cryptics was to try to have control of primary travel hubs like Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago and Los Angeles. A team was formed and dispatched to LA.

The Lady Al-Lat was designated leader. Chenrezig, along with Fell Knight Guanli and Lady Nasu, were assigned to assist Al-Lat. The team arrived as Spentu Mainyu was establishing the Infernal Court. Al-Lat ordered Chenrezig and Guanli to accept posts within the Court as heads of the Eagle and Lion Ministries respectively.

Chenrezig willingly complied and began insinuating himself into the homeless culture of Los Angeles, specifically in Santa Monica. Chenrezig had his own reasons for wanting to come to the City of Angels. He had not forgotten the prophecy he had shared with Manishtusu so many millennia before, and he was determined to uncover what potential enemy had enslaved the people, rendering them so devoid of faith.

Also during that time Chenrezig learned that Manishtusu was present in the city. Although he should have expected it, the information surprised Chenrezig. Currently, when he is not scouring the city for Lucifer, the demon is preoccupied trying to decide what to do about his old friend, whose years as an Earthbound have clearly warped him beyond all recognition.

Image: Chenrezig is a dark-skinned Indian man with a scraggly beard and wild, unkempt hair. His prominent nose and almost black eyes give him a predatory air. What many people fail to notice is that he lacks the unwashed

aroma of most bums. His many layers of mismatched clothing conceal how very thin he is.

Roleplaying Hints: Although Chenrezig is now a transient, Daniel Gopal was a brilliant biochemist and that knowledge still resides in Chenrezig. More than one person who has struck up a conversation with Chenrezig has been startled by how keen and active his mind is. There is also a missing person's report filed with the FBI because Daniel Gopal was a citizen of India.

Like so many of the Fallen Chenrezig is conflicted by personal desire and duty, but he hides it better than most others. Nobody in the city is yet aware of his old friendship with Manishtusu, nor what the Lord of Murder will do when he learns that Chenrezig is here.

In spite of a heavy accent, Chenrezig is easily understood because he tends to speak slowly and carefully. His mode of speech is at odds with the many nervous ticks his body exhibits. Like so many information gathers, Chenrezig is becoming slightly paranoid, but it has not yet affected his work.

Nature: Director

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Academics 3, Alertness 1, Computer 2, Dodge 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Politics 1, Research 3, Science 2, Subterfuge 1, Stealth 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Followers 3, Pacts 2, Resources 2, Legacy 2

Willpower: 6

Faith: 8

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Patterns

Lore: Patterns 4, Light 2, Portals 1

MINOR PLAYERS

ΖΑΟ ΖΕΙ (GAO YAO)

Zao Wei was born a quadriplegic, but her mind is one of the finest ever. Her parents were naturalized American citizens from China who worked for UCLA, and so Zao received the finest medical treatment and the talents of her mind did not go unrecognized. Still life was not pleasant or happy for Zao, and she remained on powerful painkillers all of her life, until one night she took too many.

In that moment, Gao Yao took possession of her body. During the wars Gao Yao had risen to the rank of Baroness for her skills on the battlefield and her ruthlessness, but her years in the Abyss had softened this warrior leaving her open to a more peaceful solution. Now she is a quiet Cryptic with heavy Reconciler tendencies. Al-Lat has not recruited her for the same reason that neither court deals with her: the deformity of her host.

Because Gao Yao is physically restrained to a wheelchair, the courts tend to ignore her. Kishar would not have done this, but that their rank is equal. And the Second House is higher in status than the Fourth House. This not-to-subtle snobbery offends Gao Yao, but as yet there is little she can do about it. So she bides her time and looks for an opportunity.

The one benefit Gao Yao's host provided was her impressive skills with the computer, and so even though she is a Baroness, Gao Yao works for Chenrezig in the Eagle Ministry keeping an eye on the internet and the information to be found there.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 6

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Patterns

Lore: Patterns 2, Light 2, Portals 1, Humanity 1

ONE-EYE(?)

One-Eye is the tag name for Jorge Martinez. Born to the extreme poverty of the worst parts of East LA of illegal immigrants, the young man grew up in a tiny house with twenty-two other people. The children slept six to a room, while the parents slept in tents in the minuscule backyard. As soon as he turned fifteen he went to work. The women of the house worked in a sweatshop, and the men worked illegally in a variety of manufacturing jobs.

It was a grim and hopeless existence which Jorge escaped through art. He would steal pencils and paper from the grocery store, and whenever he could he would sneak away to the nearby creek and sit and draw for hours. As he became a teenager he took up graffiti as another way of expressing this artistic urge. Eventually he became so good that some store owners would hire him to decorate their walls.

Without telling his family he stopped working at the factory. Instead he spent those hours going to bookstores and libraries to study the art of every culture he could find. He became especially fond of the Impressionistic movement. He spent his time on the buses he took to these stores designing his future walls, and it was there that he was shot by a gangbanger who mistook Jorge for someone else. The shooter fled before Jorge's body was taken over.

The fallen which possesses his body has no memory of its former existence. It was a Fiend and a Cryptic, but nothing more than that remains. As a consequence the fallen tried at first to remain disguised as Jorge Martinez, but as time passes and it still can not remember its name, the need to study has made it necessary to change his habits and identity.

So the fallen has become One-Eye, even though the body has both eyes. The nickname comes from Jorge's favorite expression, "In the valley of the blind, the one-eyed man is king." In this guise he still paints

graffiti of startling beauty. Still more, he is working in messages from another language that he cannot decipher or translate. He does not know where these messages are coming from or how they came to be in his head, but he feels a need to express them.

When not painting, One-Eye spends his time studying, especially using the downtown library which have online computers. Most fallen are still unused to the mortal world and so do not look at or understand what graffiti is, so One-Eye's message goes unread by the only group which has a chance at understanding it. One-Eye has presented himself to the Infernal Court, but does not participate in it. As such most fallen in the city have forgotten he is even there.

Willpower: 5

Faith: 5

Torment: 4

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Light

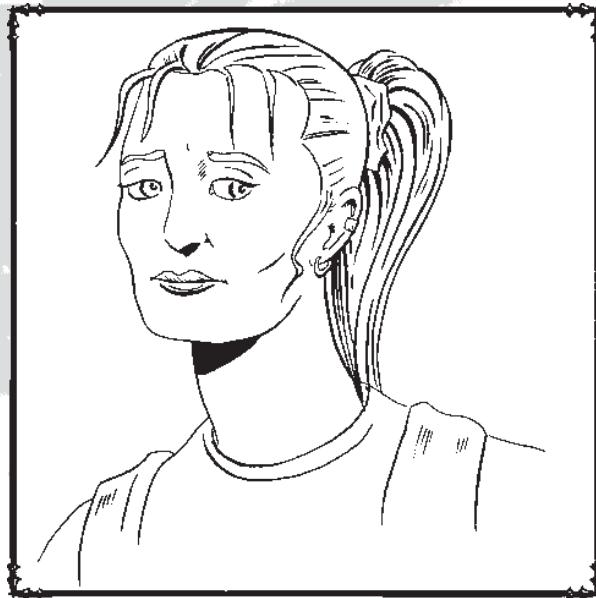
Lore: Light 2, Portals 1, Humanity1, Fundament 1

HANNAH KLEIN (BOSATSU)

Hannah Klein was a German student hitchhiking her way across America. Her family disowned her when she crossed the Atlantic. This did not deter her. She wanted to experience the world. She wanted to see everything and understand it all. This thirst for knowledge motivated her, and kept her moving across the country.

For the whole of her journey, luck kept her away from the dangerous people, but that all ended in the City of Angels. Here she was raped and beaten in her hostel. Her attacker used a lead pipe when he beat her and shattered her cheekbone. Hannah never recovered from the beating, remaining in a comatose state.

Bosatsu assumed control of Hannah's body upon escaping the Abyss. He too had been a pilgrim in search of



knowledge. He remains a committed Cryptic, but holds himself distant from others of his faction who he considers to be too politically oriented. Although what he is seeing in the world is taking him down the path towards the Raveners. It is this cynicism that permits him to coexist with Lord Aglibol for whom he works in the Ministry of the Bull.

Through Aglibol, Bosatsu received the job in the Huntington Library, but it was the Fiend's passion for knowledge which made her Head Librarian there. The library is everything a bibliophile dreams of and researchers dread. It is a maze of texts which only vaguely obey the Dewey decimal system, but is kept in scrupulous alphabetical-by-author's-last-name order.

On prominent display is the Gutenberg Bible, which has been used to summon an Earthbound once before, and many fallen wish to use it now to summon old comrades or leaders. What few people realize is that Bosatsu has had a replica made, and the original bible is hidden deep beneath the library in a room only she knows exists.

Willpower: 7

Faith: 5

Torment: 6

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Portals

Lore: Portals 3, Patterns 2, Humanity 2

ANTONIO GABRELLI (AGASTYA)

Antonio Gabrelli started his career as priest with the best of intentions. He came from a fine old family in Boston, and his scholastic career had shown much promise. He attended the famous Jesuit university in Santa Clara, California and continued to show great aptitude for his studies, but there was one problem: the vows of chastity.

Everything else he could abide, but those vows he broke almost monotonously. He strove through confession and prayer to control these urges, but always he failed. In spite of this his career flourished and he eventually became the bishop in charge of Los Angeles. Several times the Catholic Church had to hush-up an unexpected pregnancy during Antonio's tenure in the bishopric.

When Manishtusu decided he wanted control of the Catholic Church in Los Angeles he sent his lieutenant Psycho to kidnap the priest. Once he Earthbound had Antonio in the Nickerson Garden Projects, the unfortunate priest was sacrificed and the Fiend known as Agastya was summoned to possess the body.

During the war Agastya became all that was worst in the Fiends. He planned several of the most brutal sieges of the war, and had been demoted three times for his excessive cruelty. His time in the Abyss did what few had believed possible: it had made him worse. Manishtusu had served in the torture chambers of Taba'et' with Agastya, and knew him to be perfect for perverting the practices of the church.

As expected Agastya shone in his tasks. He soon expanded Antonio's lusts to pederasty and sadism, and

began to infect all those underneath him with similar depravities. The unexpected bonus that the Earthbound had not anticipated was the power control the bishop rendered. Catholicism is the most popular faith in the Tri-County Area, and the man who controls the church controls the people who attend the church.

Willpower: 5

Faith: 5

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Patterns

Lore: Patterns 2, Light 2, Fundament 2, Humanity 1

SALLY FINN (JAHI)

As a child, Sally Finn wanted to be a part of show business, but she had no talent for acting or singing. Undeterred, when she turned eighteen, she went west to Hollywood, but she soon discovered that performers had no clout in the City of Angels. Also, the only thing absolutely every actor needed was an agent, and the key quality needed to be an agent was a skill for subverting reality for perception.

In this field Sally excelled. Her favorite tactic was to discover the bad habits of successful producers and supply them with their vice, be it little boys, hard drugs or snuff films. This proved so effective that many of her clients were hired without the producer even knowing their names. Sally was so successful the Flamingo Room keeps a table reserved for her at all times. Her success came at a cost however. Her soul was so deadened by this constant exposure to the worst of humanity's lusts that when Jahi escaped from the Abyss and was looking for a host all the fallen had to do was move into Sally's body.

Jahi was an old friend and follower of Spentu Mainyu and a confirmed Faustian. When Spentu Mainyu was establishing his court he offered her a position, but



she wanted to focus her time and attention on expanding the client base, and therefore her influence, of Sally Finn. After much discussion it was decided that Jahi would take a post under Lord Vritran to make sure the Scourge had a competent advisor for dealing with people and fulfilling their desires.

As the City of Angels burned during Devil's Night, Jahi's loyalties shifted. Before she had agreed with Spentu Mainyu's plan and was content for a subservient role in it, but now she doubts that Spentu Mainyu is equal to the task. She still believes in the plan, but now sees a crafty Fiend sitting on the final throne instead of a Devil.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 5

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Light

Lore: Light 3, Patterns 2, Portals 1

BIT PLAYERS

GARY MAROSCHEK (HAKSEDIAN)

Gary Maroschek continues to work as a camera operator for Universal Studios, even after his death and possession by the demon Haksedian. The Fiend thought about abandoning the mortal job, but found it provided both money and opportunities. Maroschek mostly works on news broadcasts, but also spends a significant amount of time filming confrontational talk shows—which has helped to confirm and cement Haksedian's contempt and hatred of human beings.

While a member of the Ravener faction, Haskedian eschews overt violence and destruction. Instead, he hopes to push humanity subtly into self-destruction. He has already begun to influence directors and writers at the network. Under his guidance, the news reports focus on the worst of humanity—wars, murders and everyday atrocities—and pass over stories that reflect humankind's nobler actions. Similarly, he seeks out particularly debased or pathetic individuals, then pushes for them to be included on talk shows—providing a shining example of the sordid and base nature of humanity. Meroschek's efforts are not obvious, and perhaps he only contributes a small amount to the degradation of humanity—but perhaps it could be enough to make a difference.

MANDRAKE (PASHDANIEL)

Mandrake is not his name, but it's what people call him. The old man who wanders the streets of the Miracle Mile used to be a professional magician, a stage illusionist—at least, that's what he'd tell the passersby who'd give him money for food and wine. If it wasn't true before, it certainly is now—with the demon Pashdaniel inside him, Mandrake has magical abilities undreamt of by mortals.

Pashdaniel's concerns are not with sawing women in half, or gaining temporal power—he cares only for learning the whereabouts of Lucifer. However, the Neberu doesn't search for information in ancient texts or hidden lore. No, he believes Lucifer's secrets are apparent in the patterns of Los Angeles itself, hidden in plain sight. Mandrake looks for patterns in newspaper classifieds, in the movements of traffic, in the garbage on the streets—seeking the data that lies under the skin of the mundane city. It would be easy to dismiss Mandrake as the crank he appears to be—but his methods seem to truly *work*, and members of both demonic Courts come to the old street lunatic, begging him to divine secrets in the fluctuation of smog levels or the ratings of TV reruns.

DESLIE FLETCHER (IDBASHEK)

Under the LA streets, Idbashek immerses herself in humanity's filth and leavings, moving through the stinking tunnels of the city's sewer system. An unlikely place for a Fiend to haunt, perhaps—but Idbashek incarnated on Earth in the body of Deslie Fletcher, who had worked in sewer maintenance for twenty years.

The Neberu's sense for patterns drew her to the sewers, and the glimmerings of a theory. The interlocking maze of sewer tunnels under LA mirror, in significant ways, the intricate patterns and structures of summoning magic. Fletcher has come to believe that if she reconfigures the sewage flow in a particular way, the whole system might emulate the mystic space of a summoning circle—allowing many demons to be pulled from Hell into the safety of the sewers. She continues to test this theory, modifying the various valves and mechanisms of the sewers with the aid of other sewer workers who have become her thralls. Idbashek sends periodic reports to her masters in the Blood Court—none of whom feel inclined to inspect her work in person.

ISRAEL ARCELLA (MEONENIM)

The Inner Circle Bookshop is a fairly minor occult bookstore in downtown LA. Owner Israel Arcella primarily sells mass-market, New Age books and paraphernalia, but drops hints about the *serious* occult books he sells to “deserving seekers”—that is, collectors with fat wallets or attractive Goth girls who might consent to having sex with him.

When the demon Meonenim possessed Arcella's body after the bookseller died from a stroke, he thought he had found a treasure trove of mystic knowledge—but as it turned out, even the “serious” tomes were mostly drivel and claptrap. Still, Meonenim has inherited a successful business, a lot of connections in the esoteric book market, and a black book full of phone numbers. Now Arcella is focusing strongly on developing a true occult library—and a small cult of seekers after mystic knowledge who worship him as their mas-

ter. Unfortunately, Meonenim has also inherited his host's lusts, and constantly finds himself distracted from his work by his female thralls — and customers.

MARIANNE NORTHCOTT (DALUKMATIA)

It's hard to be a successful woman in a man's world, and few places are as "boy's only" as the stock market. Marianne Northcott struggled for years to build a career as a stockbroker, but never managed to break through into the big leagues; the major clients wanted aggressive, ruthless men to manage their accounts.

When Marianne died and Dalukmatia possessed her body, that began to change. The Neberu saw the fluctuation of the market as a constantly shifting pattern — a pattern she could manipulate easily with her demonic lore. In just a few months, Northcott has become a major player in the LA stock market, and her portfolio is swelling. She originally planned to channel the money into the coffers of the Infernal Court — but human greed overwhelmed her. Now Dalukmatia focuses on increasing her own wealth — and it's only a matter of time before her masters realize that she is holding back the bulk of her growing fortune. When that happens, Marianne could be in a lot of trouble....

KATHERINE ROGGENKAMP (LO-RUHAMAH)

In the basement of the Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital you find the morgue, which is controlled by Katherine Roggenkamp. A former doctor, Roggenkamp gave up medicine for a less-stressful position in hospital administration — until recently, when she died in a car accident and was possessed by the Fiend Lo-ruhamah. A powerful diviner, Lo-ruhamah knows the secret of telling the future by examining the entrails of corpses — preferably human corpses.

The morgue proved a valuable resource for the Neberu, and Lo-ruhamah has spent a lot of time dissecting and mutilating bodies that were scheduled for cremation or disposal, auguring the future and gaining knowledge for the Blood Court. But the demon hungers for more information, and the flow of bodies just isn't fast enough to suit her. Nurses have begun to notice Doctor Roggenkamp hanging around the emergency room, but have yet to realize that she's stealing patients away before they obtain treatment. Down in the morgue, Lo-ruhamah continues her divinations, and the hospital's crematorium runs red-hot every night.

DJ PEPPER C. (TAHAPENESKEDU)

DJ Pepper C. is a rising star in the cutthroat dance music scene of Santa Monica. Every weekend, you can find her laying down grooves at some dance party — whether it's trance for the college kids, drum & bass for the dedicated clubbers or breakbeats for the street scene. Fans say her music has a hidden complexity, with beats and samples layered thick upon each other. What the fans don't realize is that Pepper C. died in a mugging

months ago — and that it's the demon Tahapeneskedu who's setting the dance floor on fire now.

There are hidden patterns in Pepper's music — hidden so deep that only a few clubbers, their senses heightened by Ecstasy, have deciphered their secrets. These kids are the core of Tahapeneskedu's growing cult, and serve their mistress with their devotion and drug connections. The demon's aims are relatively benign — she's a member of the Reconciler faction — but already a few of her acolytes have overdosed in her service. Ecstasy is a vital component of Tahapeneskedu's operation, and she considers the occasional death an acceptable price — but others might not be so cavalier about mortal lives....

ROBERT BERESFORD (CHARCHEMISH)

When the news about his relationship with a male student broke, Robert Beresford was disgraced, his marriage broke apart, and his tenure at UCLA was cancelled. In despair, Beresford took his own life — but that just allowed the demon Charchemish to take over his body. Charchemish didn't expect mortal life to be so complicated, but he's doing his best to adapt.

Beresford lectured in physics at UCLA, and Charchemish sees enormous potential in quantum mechanics — he hopes that the mortal science can help break down the barriers around Hell and release the rest of the imprisoned demons. The Fiend wants to conduct experiments towards this — but to get free reign, he has to overcome the sex scandal and regain his position of authority. This is more than Charchemish can manage on his own, and he's hoping that the Infernal Court can help him influence UCLA's board of directors into reinstating him — but worries about what might be demanded of him in return.

DEFILERS

JONATHAN FREEMAN (VOHU MANO)

During the Time of Atrocities, the name Vohu Mano of the Ebon Legion was synonymous with savage beauty and demented tortures. While most of his fellow Devourers used their lore to inspire and maintain the righteous cause of the Rebellion, Vohu Mano sought to torture and horrify his enemies. His speciality was music. The demented refrains of his music unnerved the enemy who endured its assault upon their ears and sanity.

Then the Legions broke, but this did not slow down Vohu Mano. Deprived of a unit to support and defend him, he changed his tactics to a guerrilla-style haunting the hills around settlements and destroying anything that dared to walk alone in the night. Although Lucifer condemned the Devourer, Abbadon approved, so Vohu Mano advanced in rank.

His time in the Abyss actually seemed to make Vohu Mano worse. He became lost in his passion for hatred, until

he could no longer truly remember why he was angry or what he hated. Because of his temper most fallen assumed that Vohu Mano was a Ravener. However, in spite of his rage, the Defiler remained loyal to the commander who had protected him during the war. Abbadon now helped to lead the Faustians so Vohu Mano supported their faction.

The disappearance of the Archdukes gave Vohu Mano pause. Until then he had assumed that the absence of Lucifer meant the First Rebel had betrayed his fallen, but now it seemed possible the Morningstar was still at large and working to free his soldiers to continue the war. The thought that he might return to war was sweet to Vohu Mano, but as more and more fallen vanished, many who had been of no note, the Defiler decided it must have been a false hope.

Then the cracks appeared in the walls of the Abyss. Vohu Mano was among the first sent out into the breach. He was ordered by the dark lords to secure a base of Faith for the Faustians, and unhesitatingly Vohu Mano accepted the charge.

Jonathon Freeman grew up isolated and hated in Kansas. He had always known he was different from the other boys, but could not explain how or why. His slight build made him an easy target of scorn and ridicule for the jocks, yet even as they tormented him, he found himself, on some quiet hidden level of consciousness, enjoying their attentions. This dichotomy disturbed him, and it was not until his senior year that Jonathan came to understand that he was sexually attracted to other boys, not girls.

He knew better than to reveal his secret to the beer-swilling jocks of his high school, but shared his secret with the girl he had been dating. It was a mistake. She did not understand and took the information as an insult—which was not at all how Jonathan meant it. She told the entire school, and Jonathan spent his last month of school hiding from his peers. Only one member of the faculty did not pass judgement and tried to help him. Oddly enough it was his PE coach. Although the coach was heterosexual, he hated the sight of people being bullied, so he advised Jonathan to endure until graduation and then leave for San Francisco or Los Angeles. In the meantime Jonathan hid between his classes in the coach's office. In spite of the fear that went with it, Jonathan remembered the time fondly because of the kindness demonstrated by that coach. And until his death Jonathan would maintain correspondence with the coach.

When he first arrived in Los Angeles, Jonathan thought he had found paradise. People were free to pursue whatever lifestyle they pleased. Gay couples walked the street openly holding hands and embracing. With his good looks Jonathan soon had several admirers but few serious relationships. He felt a bit like a kid in a candy store.

However reality refused to leave him alone, and Jonathan came to learn of the dark side of the gay community. Discrimination was still rampant, and one



always had to be careful of gay-bashers who would cruise the gay clubs looking for wealthy men. They would lure these men outside and then beat and rob them. Also if employers discovered their sexual orientation, the homosexual would find his benefits cut and his chance of advancement almost vanished.

Outraged, Jonathan decided to speak out. He proved to be an effective speaker with his open and honest good looks and his passionate yet kind voice. He was not a queen, and so did not offend the more old-fashioned heterosexuals, yet he was not a butch, which many people would mistrust as being a facade. He was just himself, and many who listened to him found themselves touched by his simple eloquence.

Oddly enough, the man who attacked and beat Jonathan was not homophobic. He was just a hapless bum who had lost his mind from years of drinking gasoline and cheap liquor. The bum attacked Jonathan as the young crusader was entering his WeHo apartment after a successful fund-raiser, beating him repeatedly with a brick.

It was Jonathan's intense passion which attracted Vohu Mano. The instant the Defiler assumed control of the activist's body, he found himself changing. In spite of the hardship and isolation of his life, Jonathan was a profoundly kind and loving man who did not even hate his killer. For all his life all Jonathan wanted was to get along with everyone around him, and for everyone else to get along with each other.

This passion for kindness and mercy clashed with Vohu Mano's relentless savagery in that moment of possession, but in the end the flesh won. Vohu Mano can remember his rage, but he no longer feels it. In fact he is becoming embarrassed by the excesses of his behavior.

His once devoutly Faustian outlook has become a kinder Reconciler philosophy. Many fallen who remember the Vohu Mano of old can not believe the change, but all agree that it is not a ploy or a trick. Vohu Mano has become a Reconciler. Abbadon has learned of this conversion as well, and he is not pleased.

When Spentu Mainyu approached Vohu Mano with the post of head of the Mortal Ministry, the Defiler accepted, seeing it as an opportunity to learn how demons and humankind might best coexist.

Vohu Mano earned glory for himself when he learned of and put a stop to an effort by Manishtusu to expand his power into WeHo, but the young crusader's inability to avoid arguments with the more conservative elements of the Infernal Court have deprived him of the benefit of his renown. Aglibol in particular wars constantly with Vohu Mano, and their conflict has prevented the Defiler from being more effective than he might otherwise have been.

Image: Vohu Mano looks much younger than his thirty years. Many still mistake him for a teenager. His hair is so light it is almost white. His skin also is pale and does not tan, only burns a bright red. His voice is high-pitched but pleasant and rich with passion. His mind is highly adept at political maneuvering, but the constant attacks by Aglibol have rendered him a non-entity in the political arena. Spentu Mainyu is aware of this and is careful not to let Vohu Mano become too powerful.

Roleplaying Hints: Vohu Mano is a committed idealist, a crusader who has turned aside from the excesses of the past and in many ways resembles the principled angels of the Fall. Unfortunately, his compassion is often cynically regarded as one more tactic in the political struggles between the fallen, an all-too-predictable reaction that pains him deeply.

Nature: Martyr

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 1, Computer 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Expression 3, Etiquette 2, Intuition 2, Medicine 1, Politics 1, Streetwise 3, Stealth 2, Subterfuge 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Influence 2, Followers 3, Pacts 2, Legacy 3

Willpower: 8

Faith: 7

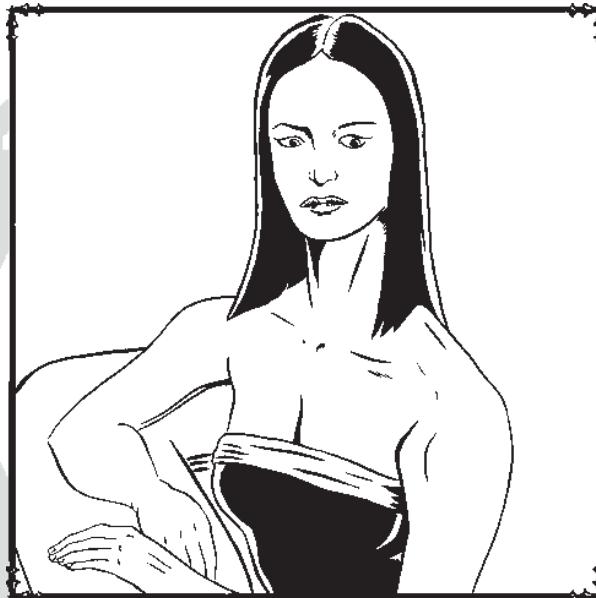
Torment: 6

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Longing

Lore: Longing 3, Storms 2, Humanity 3

CARMEN ESPARZA (INANA)

Inana taught the whales to sing. Every coastline reverberates with the memory of her music in their roars and crashes. Others might have taught the fish to



school, but Inana instructed them how to dance in the dark depths of the ocean. Inana showed the dolphins how to pirouette through the crests of the sea.

Her voice was among the first to cry out against the Almighty's restrictions, and later she maintained that if Lucifer had not rebelled, someone from her House eventually would have. Just as every artist needs an audience, Inana craved humankind's approval. As the debate gave way to action, Inana was again in the forefront passionately encouraging every angel to rise up for humankind, and encouraging those who already had that theirs was the correct choice.

As the war dragged on, Inana was still employed as a morale builder, sent wherever it was deemed necessary to cheer up warriors and give heart to the mortals caught in the crossfire. Even after Caine's crime, Inana continued to encourage those loyal to Lucifer with her beauty and music. All the way up to their defeat and banishment, Inana remained a source of pride and dignity.

The horrors of the Abyss were greater for Inana than almost any other, for it deprived her of the only thing she truly needed: her audience. The other fallen were too absorbed with their own madness to appreciate the beauty that Inana at first tried to create, and the more she created with no one to see or hear, the deeper the Torment seeped into her soul.

Other fallen continued to argue philosophy as they created their Factions, but Inana knew only hatred. If she could not create, she could destroy. She had fallen defending humankind, therefore her imprisonment was humankind's fault, and she was determined to be a hundred millennia in extracting her vengeance.

Carmen Esparza was a natural beauty, the kind of beauty that incited instant adoration or mad jealousy in

everybody who saw her. She grew up in the barrios of East LA, but always knew she was destined for greater things. At the age of sixteen, armed with a fake ID, she decided to make her opportunity.

Even in a town where all the beautiful people from all over the world come to look for work in film and television, Carmen stood out. She was quickly signed by a major talent agency. The jobs came quickly, as did the money. All the men in power and a couple of the women tried to lure this young beauty to their beds with promises of more money and fame, but Carmen knew better. She flirted mercilessly but never acted on her insinuations.

Ultimately this proved her undoing, as one night a film producer lost to the grip of cocaine became enraged when the coquette refused to come across and strangled her nearly to death. He might have gotten away with the assault, but Inana had just escaped the Abyss and had found a perfect host in the tortured model's body.

Inana did not kill the producer right away. First she blackmailed him for two months to secure herself some influential friends and easy finances, then she killed the man by castrating him and then suffocating him with his own severed extremity. So unlike other fallenno suspicion has been directed at Inana's host.

To ensure this, Inana retired from the public life. Now she relies on her contacts and interpersonal skills to secure her every need, and there is no shortage of people who wish to enlist her aid in staging elaborate parties. After all parties are one of the primary places where business is done in Los Angeles, and Inana's parties are legendary.

When Anat was establishing her Blood Court under Spentu Mainyu's advisorship, Inana was the obvious choice to head the Ministry of Aurochs, because one of her subsidiaries was a security company catering to the obscenely wealthy. Anat and Inana formed an instant bond, each perhaps recognizing in the other a kindred spirit of madness.

The primary difference between the two is that Anat supports wholesale destruction whereas Inana wants to eradicate humanity one person at a time. She delights in the look of despair and horror in the eyes of each thrall just before she breaks them. She is in no rush because even if her body is mortal, her spirit is not, and if Carmen Esparza's body should cease to be useful, Inana, through her contacts, will easily find a replacement.

Image: Inana is tall, slender and effortlessly elegant. Her features are so even and smooth that they are almost painfully beautiful. Her chocolate brown eyes are rich with innuendo and suggestion. Her brown hair is kept shoulder length and full to best frame her oval visage, and she garbs herself in blacks and reds.

Even Inana's voice is seductive, an interesting blend of naïve and suggestive. Her posture is carefully affected to elicit whatever response she is looking for, as

is her dress. Inana is always aware of the effect she has on others, and never appears disconcerted or flustered. She is the ultimate hostess.

Roleplaying Hints: Inana is the epitome of the femme fatale, using her powers of seduction and fascination to lure wistful humans to their doom.

Nature: Gallant

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Expression 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Intuition 3, Performance 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2, Stealth 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Influence 2, Pacts 3, Followers 2, Resources 4, Legacy 2

Willpower: 7

Faith: 8

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Storm

Lore: Storm 3, Transfiguration 2, Longing 2

MINOR PLAYERS

CARLOS REYES (HAURVATAT)

Carlos Reyes grew up in San Antonio. His father was a factory worker and his mom a tired housewife. The middle of eight children, Carlos grew up in a loud house. His eldest sister did more to look after the children than the mother, whose time was occupied with maintaining the household and working part time as a maid. It was a loving childhood, but Carlos still found himself starved for attention. In school he naturally drifted towards drama.

He had talent, and his teachers encouraged him to pursue his dreams. Emboldened by their words, Carlos made his way west to Hollywood, but as with so many others, the California dream exceeded reality. He worked in various menial jobs and auditioned at every opportunity, but his break never came because Hollywood produced white movies. Hispanics could only find work as villains. Carlos' downfall came through drugs, so prevalent in the poorer cultures of Los Angeles.

One night an overused artery gave way and Carlos died of internal bleeding. Drawn to the artistic fervor which had moved Carlos in life, Haurvatat took possession of the would-be actor. Finding parallels between the discrimination towards minorities and the casual cruelty of the Almighty's edicts, Haurvatat became an impassioned performer. His monologues quickly garnered local renown and secured him a job at the Black Box Theater, a well known and established 99-seater. He also attracted the attention of the Infernal Court.

Spentu Mainyu easily recruited the Defiler into the Faustians. Later, when Spentu Mainyu was moved into

the Morningstar Ministry, he again tapped Haurvatat to assist him. As an actor, Haurvatat has access to a lot of the rumors circulating in LA, and he reports all that he hears to Spentu Mainyu. That is one of the passive ways the Devil Lord keeps tabs on the other fallen of the city.

Willpower: 5

Faith: 5

Torment: 6

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Transfiguration

Lore: Transfiguration 2, Longing 2, Humanity 2

Томми ЧОНГЧАЙЮТ (gShen-rab)

Tommy Yongchayut was born in the Khau Kaen province of Thailand in the early sixties and grew up while the US was running operations through that country and into Vietnam. His aunt, working as a prostitute, seduced one of these GI's and married him. Through that connection Tommy was sent to the United States as a teen during the late seventies. He loved his new homeland and soon found work pursuing his family's profession of cooking.

People soon began to praise his dishes and would come from all over the Tri-County Area to sample its delicacies. Soon a bold plan formed in Tommy's mind. Without telling his employer, Tommy placed an ad in the local paper challenging all food critics to come try his speciality, lemon chicken, and he defied any to find fault with it. Many took up the gauntlet yet none published a negative review. This boldness earned Tommy even more renown, and he soon was in a position to completely take over the running of that restaurant. He changed the name to Khau Kaen in honor of the province where he was born.

Success continued to follow Tommy. He worked tirelessly on every detail, from the food on the menu to the decor on the walls, of his restaurant with his passion. In the end he literally worked himself to the edge of death. After almost a week without sleep and constant work, Tommy collapsed, but the Defiler called gShen-rab took possession of the body, and maintained the life the Thailander had worked so hard to build. The passion of his cooking inspired Faith in his patrons.

Like so many of his brethren gShen-rab found himself taken with mortal passion, and he desires to build humanity up to its fullest passion. He is a Faustian. His position in the infernal court is under the Fell Knight Guanli in the Lion Ministry, but the Malefactor's haphazard manner of handling his ministry means that gShen-rab is largely free to focus on his real passion.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 5

Torment: 5

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Longing

Lore: Longing 2, Storm 2, Fundament 1, Humanity 1

GIOVANNI (Adapa)

Giovanni was born into the world of fashion. His family was an old established family of designers in Italy, and young Giovanni eagerly took up his family's trade. Although, it should be noted that the young rake was more interested in hedonistic aspects of this sybaritic existence than the craft of creating and intensifying beauty. He passed more time on yachts off the Riviera and on the ski slopes of the Alps than behind the drafting boards. It was not until the third charge of rape, which was of course quietly covered up, that his family banished the wild youth to America.

Arriving in Beverly Hills to personally oversee the shop there, Giovanni fully intended to carry on where he had left off, but something happened. The young man, while spending a few moments in the back of his shop calling a local drug dealer to score some Ecstasy, noticed some designs laying on a table. The designer was clearly having difficulty with the colors. Without really thinking, Giovanni made a few alterations which perfected the design. That one move changed how his employees viewed their boss, and soon they were coming to him for all manner of advice. Stranger still, the young idler found himself enjoying the challenge.

However, he never ceased his hedonistic pursuits, and at the young age of twenty-five, he fell into a coma as a result of a combination of pills and alcohol. Into this emptied shell came Adapa. The Defiler was a natural fit for the decadent youth. Both had a passion for pleasure and passionate pleasure for their self-interests.

The years of imprisonment had warped Adapa's sense of pleasure however, and where he had once loved humanity, now the Defiler expressed only the most bitter hatred for his once-protectorate. In short, Adapa had become a Ravener. He found no place in the Infernal Court, but when the Blood Court was founded, he went to work for Lady Inana's Auroch Ministry making sure that the Blood Court was always safe not only from humanity but also from the Infernal Court.

Willpower: 7

Faith: 7

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Longing

Lore: Longing 3, Transfiguration 3, Storm 2

Барби Уентворт (Anahita)

Barbie Wentworth was everything a trophy wife was supposed to be, young, beautiful, impeccably fashionable, but few people realized the brutality of her youth. She had grown up in the wild hills of Kentucky born to parents who had only just experienced puberty. Her mother had died giving birth to Barbie, and her father died in a mining accident when she was three. This caused her to be sent to an uncle on her father's side, but this uncle was a depraved



man who soon began to molest the young girl. Barbie endured as long as she could until one night she killed the uncle while he was passed out next to her.

Wasting no time, the now twelve year old girl scrounged the house for every valuable and hopped on a bus heading west. Her mind had already formed a plan. She understood the effect her body had on men, and she intended to make full use of that gift. In the darker sections of LA, she found work in the dirtiest aspects of the porn industry. She actually made a fair amount of money because she never developed a drug habit, but she did become infected with HIV. Once she had enough money, the young girl, still a minor, armed herself with the most fashionable clothes and a fake ID. She began to prowl the high-class hangouts of Beverly Hills until she found herself a husband.

By now the HIV had given way to AIDS, but Barbie managed to hide this fact from her husband. She became everything he needed. She charmed his friends. She made him look virile and manly, and she masked the fact that he was a closet homosexual. Her disease destroyed her soul, and opened the path for Anahita who changed Barbie's MO slightly. Where once the trophy wife had allowed herself to be a passive decoration, now Anahita seduces many powerful men to increase the range of her influence.

He philosophy is decidedly Ravener and she serves Lady Nasu in the Blood Court's Eagle Ministry by keeping tabs on the influential members of the entertainment industry who flock to the swimming pools of Beverly Hills. In her spare time, she is building a network of blackmailers and spies. She has become the most like the succubi of legend using every persuasion available to an attractive young woman to secure knowl-

edge and influence. Anahita has not been slow to notice how ineffectual Nasu is becoming, and has laid plans to soon replace her as the Court's Lidless Eye.

Willpower: 8

Faith: 7

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Transfiguration

Lore: Transfiguration 3, Longing 3, Humanity 3

BIT PLAYERS

LYNDON PETROVICH (KYHUNG)

Kyhung believes that God can be found in the pleasures of man. Enjoyment and happiness are the things that seem to elevate humans, and so he seeks to pursue bliss rather single-mindedly. The previous owner of the body, Lyndon Petrovich, was a chef at an upscale French café in Beverly Hills, and so Kyhung's expressions of pleasure tend to come across as a total love of food and cooking (exemplified by Petrovich's 350-lb. form). As a Reconciler, Lyndon seeks to make peace with God by enjoying all of Creation and helping mortals do much of the same. He is constantly on the lookout for other Reconcilers entering the city, and he will attempt to mesh goals with them as soon as he finds them. Any Reconciler (and the occasional Faustian) is free to eat at the café, (*Café Fin*) for no charge. Petrovich is a loud and boisterous man and will meet with any and all parties interested.

KEITH OCHOA (GA-GORIB)

Ga-Gorib styles himself the "Serpent of the Slave Pit," a title he used in ancient days that reflected his practice of dragging humans down into a massive pit not far from Dudael, raping them, and murdering them. Ga-Gorib sought a soul with anger and lust in its heart after forcing his way from the Abyss, and found the answer in the form of high school student Keith Ochoa. Half of Ochoa's face was covered with a dark, tough birthmark, and the constant mockery and abuse from this slight disfigurement instilled the boy's mind with much rage and unfulfilled sexual need. After Ga-Gorib settled in, he promptly went about the act of murdering Ochoa's single mother with a shotgun and taking their scummy duplex all for himself. There he maintains a "house of horrors," kidnapping both women and men (some of which were fellow students who either mistreated him or never gave him the time of day) and forcing them into grisly acts of sexual satiation and self-mutilation. Some are thralls, others just physical slaves whom Ga-Gorib punishes nightly.

BOBBY JASPER (URIOTH)

Bobby and his brother Daniel owned a head shop down on Ventura boulevard, and both Gen-X'ers were responsible for holding massive bacchanalia parties where hallucinogens and Ecstasy were handed out like breath

mints. Urioch was attracted not to Bobby himself (as he was essentially a burn-out with little brain-power left), but was attracted to the potential available there. Now that he has taken Bobby's overdosed body as his own, Urioch continues running the shop and holding the parties, essentially shouldering the brother, Daniel, out of the entire picture. Urioch has no interest in hurting mortals, and in fact finds them rather fascinating — but he does espouse Faustian ideals and understands one simple premise: it's easier to get what you want out of somebody when they're fucked-up on something. Urioch has lately favored peddling mind-blowing drugs (specifically hard-to-find hallucinogens like *ayahuasca*) to adolescents, as they're easier to manipulate while under the influence.

PRABHA VATI, "LADY LIGHT" (TIKIDOSHE)

Prabha, under her guise of "Lady Light," was a dominatrix who served some of the wealthiest clientele in all of Los Angeles — film producers, recording artists, gallery owners — but was eventually murdered by an out-of-control patron in her Pomona Beach boutique. Tikidoshe took over, and has upped the ante with Prabha's business — anything the dominatrix wouldn't do before, she now does, delving deep into the potential perversions of the mortal mind and all the Faith that such acts can cultivate. Often dressed in trademark all-white leather, Tikidoshe is most consumed with the act of material gain — not money, per se, but the collection of objects. One of her pet projects has become the acquisition of rare, foreign sports cars. She has also become quite the social butterfly among the fallen, and has sought to ingratiate herself among specific members of the Blood Court with the hopes of currying favors from those fallen who are greater in station than her. Her end goal is to ascend the ranks as quickly as possible, no matter the cost to her mortal host's body.

LUTHOR VINE (BALSEMEM)

"Sidewalk prophecy" is Balsemem's new trick. He remembers little of his demon self, and instead stays primarily inside the mortal memories of the host, Luthor Vine. Luthor was a twelve-year-old Crip with a penchant for spray-painting raunchy messages across buildings, billboards, and buses. But now, with Balsemem in control, the figure of Luthor Vine can often be seen spray-painting quotes from religious texts and literature instead of lewd words and graphic images. Balsemem hopes to use the boy's body and mind to "inspire" the members of LA's low-class neighborhoods and barrios in the fashion of an old-school Muse. Problem is, Luthor's new style of "tagging" has pissed-off every macho Surenó and surly Crip or Blood who isn't really interested in reading quotes from Milton or the *I Ching*. They see him as a little punk-ass fairy who's making their territories look like some bullshit library, and soon someone will attempt to punish the demon for the breaking of code.

SLY JONES (DRESMIEL)

The female angel Dresmiel is now trapped, demon-style, in the body of Sylvester "Sly" Jones, an attention-deficit college-drop-out rich-kid whose only plan in Los Angeles was to get high, get fucked, and blow money. Dresmiel was once something of a "battle muse," inspiring the fallen angel armies with songs that would tear across the skies with waves of power, but only some of that memory has translated over into Sly's mind. Dresmiel unfortunately still retains much of the "party-boy" attitude that the mortal host boasted, though it has been colored by the memory of spurring legions to action and passion, and slowly Dresmiel awakens to her/his potential. In the meantime, however, Dresmiel does little more than amuse himself/herself through television during the day and social gratification in the evening. The demon is extraordinarily outgoing and socially-driven, and is likely to get any fallen encountered into the frenzied pleasure-seeking available to their mortal hosts.

KERR TYLER (HANTU)

UCLA basketball star Kerr Tyler was a pinnacle of physical exertion — on the court he was a frightening display of energy and exhaustion, and off-court he pushed himself to such physical extremes that it was clear to the media that he was quite the adrenalin junkie. This narcissistic devotion to his own form attracted Hantu, an Oceanite warrior whose commitment to battle was something of an art form. Hantu took Kerr off the team, oddly uninterested in the attention it afforded him, as no fallen seemed to care, so what did it matter? Hantu was a devout Luciferan and remains so — he cannot bring himself to admit that Lucifer could've been wrong, because if the Lightbringer was wrong, then so was Hantu to follow him. And Hantu doesn't like being wrong. In this day, Hantu offers himself as something of a mercenary to the Infernal Court, parading around as a taker of dangerous missions. Hantu enjoys the constant thrill of danger, and won't accept vicarious adventure — it has to be him, all the time, with no help whatsoever.

CECE SHERIDAN (CALLIEACH)

Callieach wants worship, and no small amount of it, either. She sees the world as an untapped resource of Faith walking around on two-legged Faith batteries called "people," and she wishes to do whatever it takes to get these cattle to bow down, lick her heels, and fill her with the devotion she deserves. She stole the body of accident victim Cece Sheridan, a folk artist who played at local bars and coffee joints and already had a small following. Since then, Sheridan's music has gone from slow, folksy stuff to a more energetic, beat-infused style. She enjoyed the attention even the low-level of stardom the music afforded her, but lately it hasn't been enough. She slaps up flyers, places classified ads in newspapers, even recruits

on the streets and in the alleys, advertising one simple premise — *she can make them feel good*. A Faustian to the core, Callieach has literally made a temple to herself in her apartment, and nightly invites her most devoted of “groupies” to the place so they may venerate her — often in the form of cooking for her, cleaning her house, giving her sexual pleasure, and doing her laundry.

DEVOURERS

JEFFREY BLACK (ASHUR)

As a member of the sixth House, Ashur found no joy in the company of his fellow angels that could compare with the delight of his forests. Even deserts held more lively interests for Ashur than the idealistic debates of other angels. The restrictions laid on him and his fellows to remain unknown to Adam and Eve bit deeply into his core. Here was the perfection of the wild and he could not interact with it. Others of the sixth house, in general, did not feel as he did, but Ashur was long used to being the odd one out.

When Lucifer stood in defiance of the Almighty and that odious restriction, Ashur quickly took his place at the First Rebel’s side. He had not participated in any of the debates. Indeed he had largely been unaware of their existence, but once the choice was placed before him, Ashur was not slow to take it up.

He quickly became feared as a warrior and rose to the rank of Fell Knight. When the Legions formed, Ashur unhesitatingly joined the Iron Legion because — though he was an accomplished fighter and widely feared as such — Ashur preferred to foster life and defend than attack. It was in the Iron Legion that he met Kishar and discovered love.

Then he was captured and taken to Sagan, the prison city. Here he languished for two months in the dark bowels of the labyrinth awaiting his judgement from the Almighty. In that darkness he realized that his only regret was being separated from Kishar. Like an answer to a prayer, one day his cell door opened and there stood Kishar. Together they fled to the mountains around Sagan, and there they pledged never to be parted again, and whispered each in the other’s ear their True Names.

From then on they fought back-to-back in every battle. They never stooped to the atrocities their fellow fallen did. Neither did they offer quarter to any foe the Morningstar sent them to face. They did not achieve the fame that some of the fallen earned. They participated in no debates. They sought no glory, only success for Lucifer and prosperity for mankind.

Even once they were banished to the Abyss, the two lovers stayed at each other’s side and kept a quiet but firm support for Lucifer. They were not worried that their Lord was not present. That surely was a good thing. It meant he was free to operate and eventually free his



army. When the Archdukes disappeared they nodded their heads knowingly and waited.

Cracks appeared in the walls of the Abyss, and Kishar and Ashur quickly challenged the breach together. However, once they were free, the pull of the Abyss separated the two lovers as they fought to anchor themselves in the physical world.

Jeff Black, a Los Angeles County Sheriff, was driving home from a double shift when a car pulled up alongside him. The beat-up Cadillac rolled down its passenger window and out came a shotgun. He was struck by both shots and cut by the shattering of his windshield, and he lost control of his old Toyota truck. The Cadillac drove off, leaving the Sheriff to die in the wreckage.

As Jeff Black slid into the blackness of death, Ashur took up residence. In life Jeff had been a highly respected officer, famous for his steadfast honesty. When scandal after scandal rocked the LAPD and the LA County Sheriff department, Jeff was always cleared. It was this moral fortitude which resonated with the searching Ashur. When he awoke he was not filled with a need for revenge but a fear for his family.

Officer Black had three children, and the last pregnancy had gone badly for his wife who was still bedridden from a broken pelvis. This meant that the only financial support for the family was Jeff, and if anything happened to him it would be disastrous for the family. Ashur had known romantic love for Kishar, but this potent desperate love overwhelmed him. Hardly knowing what he was doing he pulled the now healed body of Jeff Black from the twisted wreckage and walked to the nearest phone to call home. The relief when his eldest girl picked up the phone practically hurt Ashur.

From that time on his mind raged with a need to make amends with the Almighty. Ashur has been possessed by Jeff Black's need to protect his family, and the thought that his girls could suffer because of the hubris of the fallen causes him pain. The arguments of the Reconcilers which had seemed so childish and pathetic to him before now rang with truth. In this rush of emotions, Ashur forgot about Kishar, his lost love.

When his lover found him he could not believe the change in her. The one he remembered was kind and loving, full of understanding, but the creature he found himself talking with was harsh. Kishar showed no signs of mercy and seemed willing to let all life die if Lucifer so ordered. Try as he might, Ashur has not been able to reach his lover. His feelings for her have not lessened, however. If anything they have become stronger, but he will not permit her blind loyalty endanger his children.

So as not to become a risk to Kishar now that she has become the ruler of Los Angeles, Ashur has removed himself from politics and will not attend Court. Instead he tries to work as much good as he can through his job and community.

Image: Jeff Black was the stereotype of a corn-fed, mid-Western, white good looks. He is a little over six feet tall and weighs close to two hundred and thirty pounds.

Roleplaying Hints: In spite of their sudden philosophical differences, Ashur is still very like Kishar. He is very strict, especially with himself, and permits no gray to confuse his view of the world. His love for Kishar is stronger than ever but it is now tinged with a fear of her ruthlessness. In speech he is simple and straightforward.

Ashur is very scrupulous in avoiding politics because he does not want to become a burden to Kishar, who is having enough trouble keeping the city under control. For now, nobody knows that Ashur and Kishar know each other's True Name, but should that ever change, life would become even harder for the beleaguered Baroness.

Nature: Judge

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Computer 1, Dodge 3, Drive 2, Empathy 1, Firearms 3, Intimidation 3, Intuition 2, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Politics 1, Security 2, Stealth 2, Streetwise 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Eminence 2, Pacts 3, Resources 1, Legacy 3

Willpower: 7

Faith: 8

Torment: 6

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Beast

Lore: Beast 4, Flesh 2, Fundament 3, Humanity 2

MINOR PLAYERS

VIOLET TAKAHASHI (AMERETAT)

Violet Takahashi was born in an internment camp just outside of Los Angeles during World War II. Her father had been a successful gardener before the war, but during, her family was prisoner in their homeland. Although she had no memories of the time, her father's mind had been permanently affected by his time there, and he vehemently eschewed all things of his heritage. He forbade the speaking of any language but English in his house, and the family shrine his parents had maintained was thrown out.

Violet grew up under this harsh regime, and her only solace was found in the new shrine which her grandparents built in a shed in the backyard. There she learned of her ancestry and her future craft from the same man who taught her father the secrets of the earth, her grandfather. Her scholastic career was mediocre but her talent with plant life was something to behold. She found steady work designing Japanese gardens for the wealthy.

One night on way to her car she was pulled into an alley by a rapist. There she was beaten and violated in a most brutal manner, but she never stopped fighting. In the end her body and spirit broke under the assault, and the way for Ameretat was opened. The Devourer opened her new eyes to see the man who had assaulted her host and exacted an immediate revenge.

Ameretat found the Infernal Court and took a position under Lord Aglibol, who in turn secured her a post in the massive botanical section of the Huntington Library. Using the enormous talent of her host, Ameretat quickly advanced to run the gardens, and she always keeps at least one garden closed for fallen to meet and train or stage before launching an attack. Her political outlook is bitter and harsh. She is a Ravener through and through.



Willpower: 7**Faith:** 6**Torment:** 8**Apocalyptic Form:** The Visage of the Flesh**Lore:** Flesh 2, Beast 2, Fundament 2**MOCO (KURTTIKEYA)**

Moco was born Mauricio Gonzales. He was enormous and stupid. By the time he was sixteen he towered over his peers at six foot six, weighing nearly three hundred pounds. He joined Nuestra Familia not out of any desire to commit crime but because that is what his friends told him to do. His leaders were clever enough not to use the giant for anything other than standing in the background and looking mean. He was arrested several times simply because he looked so intimidating, and the police did not want to leave him walking the streets where he could do untold damage. Nobody noticed that Moco hated violence.

Eventually he was convicted of a murder his friend had committed. In prison the peaceful giant learned to fight, and there he killed for the first time. He was still released early on parole, and part of his service was to work at the Windsor House as a groundskeeper. The work suited Moco to a "T." He severed all of his former ties and lived on the grounds where he worked.

Unfortunately for him, his former leaders did not like to let such useful tools go without a fight. They sent several foot-soldiers over to the haunted house with baseball bats and orders to return with a reinstated Moco or else Moco's ears and nose. The confrontation went poorly, and the giant managed to lay out four of his nine assailants before succumbing to their bats and chains.

Kurttikeya had been a steady warrior for his cause and found a natural sympathy with the broken youth who only wanted peace and to keep his house clean. The attackers had removed one ear when the fallen took control of the body. Within moments the remaining assailants were no more, and the Devourer was burying their corpses.

In the Blood Court, Kurttikeya, who is declared as a Faustian, works for Lady Inana in the Ministry of the Bull. The stolid, defense orientation of the ministry is a perfect fit for the Defiler warrior even though he does not get along so well with his Ravener Lady.

Willpower: 8**Faith:** 6**Torment:** 8**Apocalyptic Form:** The Visage of the Beast**Lore:** Beast 3, Flesh 3, Fundament 3**ROBIN JANG (HIAKEN)**

Robin Jang was born in Korea, but his family moved when he was still a child. Hence Robin has always viewed himself as an American. Like so many other children of immigrants, he existed between the heritage of his family

and the culture of the land he grew up in, and so became accepted by neither and mistrusted by both.

The strain became so great that Robin searched for succor in the rampant drug culture. There no one cared about who he was but accepted him as a fellow loser. To support his habit Robin worked for a minor dealer as a collector. Although not imposing in size or bearing Robin was highly adept with baseball bats, and he knew how to control his temper so that he only hurt his targets a little. It did not do to inflict unnecessary damage.

When his employer developed aspirations beyond his station Robin began to work as a bodyguard for the dealer. He died in a drive-by shooting which targeted his boss. The hit was a success, but as Robin lay dying, Hiaken took possession of his body. To ensure there would be no further threats to this body and to extract a modicum of revenge Hiaken hunted down and killed the rival dealer and most of his gang.

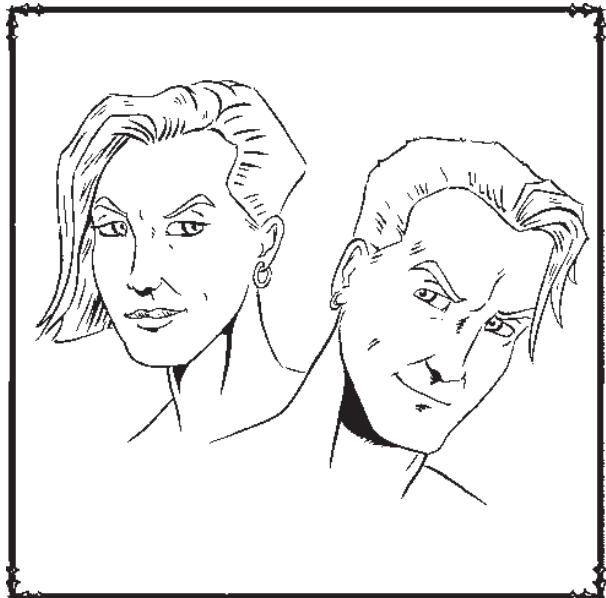
In the Infernal Court, Hiaken works under Fell Knight Guanli. This means that Hiaken does very little for the court because the Lion Ministry is fairly inactive under Guanli's absentee leadership. This is something Hiaken resents because he is aware of the existence of the Blood Court and wishes to eradicate them, but as of right now his warnings have not been heard. Philosophically Hiaken is a Reconciler, and is close friends with Vohu Mano. Lately he has been acting as a kind of bodyguard for that Devourer.

Willpower: 6**Faith:** 6**Torment:** 6**Apocalyptic Form:** The Visage of the Flesh**Lore:** Flesh 3, Beast 2, Fundament 1, Humanity 1**BRIC-ET-BRAC (AZHIA AND DANIAKI)**

Bric-et-Brac were born twins. Daniel and Danielle Montague grew up in middle class suburbia in the Tri-County Area. All of their lives they knew they were different. They could not understand why their parents were so upset with them when they were discovered exploring each others bodies late one night. Though beaten and punished the two continued to explore their sexuality, at first with each other, then with other partners.

Through this process they discovered that they preferred members of their own sex for coupling, but nobody interested them romantically. As they grew older they both became interested in dance to express themselves, and they took the stage name Bric-et-Brac to mask their blood relationship. In this environment they flourished until Danielle had the misfortune to attract the eye of a rich old man who was looking for a new mistress.

The old lecher pursued Danielle, and though she resented his attentions, neither she nor her brother knew how to confront the old man. In the end the two decided to commit suicide by breathing the exhaust fumes of their



car. Into their bodies came the souls of a pair of fallen lovers who had leapt from the Abyss together. Azhi and Dahaki assumed control of the twins, and resumed their ancient love affair with a new passion. They use this passion to inspire Faith from the audiences in the Hallow Cube where they frequently go to reap.

Politically they serve Fell Knight Ravana's Lion Ministry. Like her Infernal Court counterpart and lover, Ravana is an absentee head of her ministry. The difference is that Azhi and Dahaki do not allow this lack of leadership to prevent them from attacking those they perceive as being threats to the Blood Court. They are planning to replace Ravana as soon as possible. They are Raveners of the most intense kind.

Willpower: 7/8 (Azhi/Dahaki)

Faith: 6/7

Torment: 8/8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Flesh (same for both)

Lore: Flesh 2, Beast 2, Fundament 2 (same for both)

BIT PLAYERS

CARMEN PARIGI (MOIRATHA)

Carmen's love of zoology (and the fact she was studying it at USC) was the beacon that brought Moira the demon into her body. Carmen never died — she merely became so destitute and depressed after being raped by her own boyfriend that she was left a sleeping vessel fresh for possession. Now, with Moira at the wheel, Carmen has developed a new lease on life, becoming active socially on campus (going so far as to join the Phi Mu academic sorority) and pushing ahead once again in her classes. Moiratha was so lost in Carmen's still-living memory that she barely recognizes

herself as demon, and still considers herself to be "Carmen Parigi." Despite the confusion, Moira loves humanity and actively believes people can be shepherded into new arenas of knowledge, and constantly attempts to pursue this plan with single-mindedness. Unfortunately, Moiratha had significant power before the Abyss, and some eyes have looked to her as a new fallen, easily manipulated. Soon these forces may move to control her.

DR. VINCENT GAU (OMITSUNU)

Omitsunu knows, due to his psychiatrist host, that the human mind is both a record of information and a sea of emotion. What the doctor did not realize was just how easily manipulated these two elements are — the mind could be used like a hammer or a pair of tweezers, delicately dissecting knowledge or smashing square pegs into circle holes. The demon realizes it, however. Dr. Gau was a chief administrator at the Los Angeles County Rehabilitative Hospital, an asylum focusing on cautious, compassionate rehabilitation of the criminally insane. Since Omitsunu has taken over after Gau took a fall down a set of steps, the hospital has slowly grown to adopt harsher "rehabilitations," experimental medicating techniques, and archaic brain operations. One by one, the staff was fired (or subverted), and now Gau exists in a realm of his own creation, a pristine veneer of the psychiatric community on the outside, and a lunatic hell on the inside that grows worse by the week. Gau lies somewhere between Faustian and Ravener, and once he makes his experiments "public" to the fallen community, he will become a strong radar blip that both Courts will seek to recruit or destroy.

MOLLY VAZQUEZ (NYX)

Nobody knows where "Molly Vazquez" is from — only that she is beautiful, porcelain-skinned, and has a lustrous Spanish accent. No records exist for her "mortal body," and she is essentially a mystery. A mystery worth looking into, for she has recently entered the demonic arena of the City of Angels with an impressive gambit — she procured hard-to-obtain real estate off of Manhattan Beach and built a night-club there from the ground-up. Called *The Kingdom*, it's a sprawling, four-floor monstrosity with furniture and fixtures from countless time periods — including ones that haven't happened yet. One thing is consistent — it's all dark, there's a lot of neon, and it's become one of LA's quickest-to-the-top hot spots for the chic Hollywood crowd. Nyx (who prefers to be called Molly) has placed herself on the fourth floor of this club every night since the club's opening, and stays there from open to close every night. There she waits for other fallen to come to her (and they do), where she acts as an information broker, doling out diamonds of information among dogs. Nobody knows where she gets her data from, and some grow increasingly curious — but no matter what, everybody pays to get at what she knows.

MUHTADI ABOLHAJJAN (THAUTOS)

Muhtadi was a professor of Egyptology and mythology in early days, and in his later days he was a librarian at the County of Los Angeles' main public library. Bone cancer felled him, and Thauthos entered. The demon was a great archivist, a cataloguer of angel deeds during the Rebellion, much of what went on (and specifically "who-did-what") during that time of dissent was Thauthos' domain. He seeks to resume this position, and has enthralled a number of students across the Los Angeles area (primarily from UCLA) to whom he promises knowledge in an exchange for them to "spy" on the movements of other fallen. Thauthos thinks he remembers much from the ancient days before the Abyss, and he's right to a degree — problem is, he doesn't remember it all *correctly*, and can be found disseminating incorrect information about the prehistory of Man to other fallen, causing new grudges and favors to flare up because, in truth, a lot of the other fallen don't remember correctly *either*.

AGENT MARCUS KEYES (SAUVITAR)

Sauvitar was once a great military strategist among the fallen angels, aiding the Ebon Legion particularly in elements of defense. Sauvitar knew how to not only take a city, but how to *keep* it. Only recently has Sauvitar escaped from the Abyss, and he has discovered the body of an FBI forensics expert, Marcus Keyes. Keyes is an enormous African-American agent, and Sauvitar relishes in the physical threat intrinsic to Keyes' imposing form and also enjoys the finely honed mind that the man had. Sauvitar mistakenly interprets the FBI as a mortal military institution, and has been acting accordingly while "on the job," drawing undue attention from human superiors. The demon has also offered himself up to Kishar as an untapped resource of military strategy, but as yet her pride hasn't allowed her to accept his offer. He continues to catalogue the fallen of the city and determine how they can be used in the coming days.

ED KELNER (ADRIEL)

Ed Kelner was a computer programmer for Sunburst Software in the Silicon Valley, and was fortunate enough to invest in some of the rare dot-com's that actually didn't drop through the floor after a year or two. He was the model of the modern American man — slightly overweight, with a wife, two children, economy car, and a house in Torrance. He also had good old American heart disease, which left his body fresh for Adriel, a reclusive demon with a hundred grudges from the Time of Babel and a ton of Torment. Kelner's mind tempered Adriel, however, but it caused something of a clash of minds — one mind seeks revenge (or preemptive action against revenge) against the fallen of Los Angeles for perceived wrongs. Another mind is merely enjoying the redundancy of the job (and the information it provides), the family life, the simplicity. As

such, Adriel spends a lot of time sitting on the beach in his business clothes, pondering what to do next.

DONALD STEIN (ORIAS)

Orias never imagined that humans would create their own forms of divination in the forms of "money" and the "Stock Market" — but once he found this information in suicidal stockbroker Donald Stein's mind, it was only a matter of time before Orias began studying the ebb and flow of money, and the cosmic predictions that could be divined from it. Orias is obsessive, and has taken Donald Stein's life and thrown it away in pursuit of understanding and deciphering the blueprints hidden within the "ticker tape." He is poor and destitute, barely eating and dressing in dirty suits, and occasionally he will stumble into any fallen who will listen to him about his predictions for Los Angeles and the world-at-large. Most of his information is wildly speculative, based on "findings" contained in the market share information (obtained from the Internet, cable, newspapers), but occasionally he hits one out of the park. Problem is, nobody listened. Orias actually predicted Lucifer's return in the skies on Devil's Night, but he was hastily ignored. If anyone remembers the prediction he made, however, and how it came true, they'll begin looking for Donald "Orias" Stein in earnest.

SILVIA SARAH WOODS (MANAT)

The Luciferans have mounted an aggressive communications campaign with other fallen, and with the potential sighting (or hoax) of Lucifer in the skies has forced the Luciferans to focus this campaign on the City of Angels. Manat — once Sylvia Sarah Woods, a journalist at the Philadelphia Inquirer — is part of this uncompromising mission. She has recently come to LA and asserted herself as a part of all fallen business, big and small — she doesn't seem to be interested in changing anything or affecting it in any way, but merely seeks to know every facet of information that could involve the Lightbringer. No one has moved against her yet because of her association with Luciferan higher-ups (specifically Nazathor, Lucifer's supposed "lover"), but the time will come when significant figures grow weary of Manat's probing. She will approach new fallen in the city with persistence. Her personal belief is that Lucifer has returned, and that the appearance of him on Devil's Night harkens the coming of a new war.

SLAYERS**OLD TILDA (NASU)**

Like all the angels, Nasu loved her charges, but the act of entropy horrified the ignorant humans and subsequently made them afraid of the Seventh House. The Almighty's edict cut cruelly into Nasu's core. She desperately wanted to assure humanity that entropy was a natural, even beautiful,



thing, and that human beings had nothing to fear. A creature of love and used to the perfect love of the Almighty, Nasu needed to be loved by the ones she helped oversee.

While the Great Debate raged Nasu remained undecided, but when Lucifer decided to defy the Creator then Nasu chose to stand with the Morningstar. This brought down the Almighty's curse. All of the rebels from the Seventh House listened in horror when Michael declared that humanity must die. The full horror of this sentence came when the Slayers realized that human souls upon dying passed beyond their knowledge. Every other death was entirely under their command, but not their beloved humans.

To deal with this Nasu helped to construct a spiritual realm which could house the souls of those followers who fell in battle. It was meant as a temporary location to keep the faithful nearby while the Seventh House explored the mysteries of human death. For hundreds of years they worked, drawing upon the talents of Malefactors and Devourers to assist the effort. Finally they succeeded, and on that proud day Nasu stood back, pleased with their efforts, and felt a little of the pressure of the Almighty's curse relieved.

Before the Slayers could begin their examinations of what happened to the human soul, the war was lost, and the fallen were condemned to the Abyss. Here a new horror was discovered. Nasu, and many of her colleagues who worked on creating this spiritual realm, were so intertwined with its fabric that they could still feel it and on a very limited level interact with it. So many Slayers not only felt the faint connection with the mortal world but also with the realm of the dead. What was worse was their temporary structure continued. It had not been meant to last for millennia. Nasu had been so sure that

she and brethren would discover the answer before long that they never considered what would happen to the spirits of humanity after thousands of years.

Like so many other theorists Nasu was too detached from her emotions to become passionate. While other Slayers became convinced that it was necessary to make amends with the Almighty, Nasu sat and thought. She did not necessarily disagree, but she wanted to study carefully before she committed to a new course of action. Many of her fellow Slayers felt the same way as she. What she did not notice, as is common with theorists, is that even though she did not become passionate, her emotions were active, and she was becoming quietly resentful towards the Almighty who could permit such pain and agony to exist in the universe.

Undetected by either herself or others, madness crept into Nasu's core. It is a quiet, almost calm, sort of madness which could erupt, given the proper incentive, in a firestorm of destruction. Then the first cracks were noticed in the walls of the Abyss, and Nasu was one of the first to enter the breach to see what lay on the other side.

Matilda was born mentally retarded in the backwoods of Georgia. When her parents were forced to send her to school by the government her condition was first diagnosed, but her parents were too ashamed of their backwards child to permit her to attend special education. They decided she was simply willful, and the only way to cure willfulness was with a nice, thick rod liberally applied to the back and buttocks.

This failed to work, so the parents took the girl to a local holy man who did miraculous things with snakes and poisons. There Matilda was subjected to multiple snake bites on the theory that the serpent's poison could drive the demon which possessed the girl and caused her backwardness. This also failed to succeed. Another parishioner, saddened by the retarded girl's torment, rescued Matilda and ran to Atlanta.

In Atlanta, the savior died in an automobile accident. Matilda was left to fend for herself, but she did not know how to do this, so she became one of the many transients on the streets of Atlanta. Time and misery eroded her spirit until she became known as Old Tilda. One day Nasu arrived and was able to displace the soul that possessed the body.

It did not take long for Nasu to make contact with the Cryptics in Atlanta. Whereas many Demons found their natures softened by the influence of their human hosts, Nasu's host had the opposite effect. Old Tilda had not the intellect to understand how she had suffered, but Nasu did. However, just as before this Torment was quiet, too quiet for the other fallen, who were busy struggling with their own Torment, to notice.

When the Cryptics decided to launch an expedition to Los Angeles, they quickly secured Nasu as an assistant

for Al-Lat. Her host's firsthand knowledge of the homeless culture made her a valuable asset, and she helped Chenrezig acclimatize himself to this culture. The two quickly assimilated themselves in Los Angeles. Chenrezig took Santa Monica, and Nasu staked out Hollywood. It was there that Nasu recruited Michael Gutenov, the owner/curator of the Museum of Death, as a thrall.

Working with Gutenov, Nasu formed a cult called the Harvesters. For the mystery of what happened to the human soul after death still preyed upon Nasu's mind, but her unnoticed madness led her to an answer which would have been abhorrent to her original self. She decided to study death by kidnapping the homeless and killing them. Of course with each death, Nasu slipped deeper into her Torment, but as always her quiet and thoughtful personality meant nobody really noticed.

The formation of the Blood Court actually slowed Nasu down because Al-Lat ordered Nasu to accept the post of All-Seeing Eye of the Eagle Ministry for the second court, and the duties of this post occupied enough of Nasu's time that she had to slow down her cult's murderous activities. During this time Michael Gutenov was fatally stabbed by one of the transients. Afraid of losing her favorite thrall, Nasu called out to an old friend, Hepat, to possess the body.

Devil's Night proved to be a greater temptation then Nasu could resist. With Hepat at her side and her faithful Harvesters, Nasu went on a killing spree. Once again her slide into Torment is increasing out of her control, but now people are noticing. Anat has noticed a lack of information from Nasu, and Al-Lat has started to suspect the true nature of the Harvesters' activities. Neither leader wants attention drawn to them by the carelessness of a follower, so Nasu could find herself in a great deal of trouble in a short period of time.

Image: Old Tilda is bent and wrinkled leather stretched thin across of a frame of bones. Few appreciate just how thin she is because of the many layers of clothing she wears. Her clothes stink badly of body odor and human waste. Her hair is a matted tangle of white, but now her eyes gleam with an unexpected life.

Her voice is slow and nasally, and many people think she is retarded. Old Tilda was, but Old Tilda is now gone and Nasu reigns in her place. Nasu is not retarded, but remains as mentally acute as ever. So the impression created by her voice is very deceptive.

Roleplaying Hints: The more Nasu kills, the deeper she slides into Torment, and the deeper she slides into Torment the more she desires to kill. Nasu is caught in a vicious circle from which there is no escape except the very death she is pretending to study. In many ways she is a tragic figure whose every step was made with the best of intentions, but has only made matters worse.

Nature: Autocrat

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Awareness 2, Crafts 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Intuition 3, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Research 3, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 3, Streetwise 2

Backgrounds: Legacy 3, Pacts 3, Paragon 2

Willpower: 7

Faith: 8

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Spirit

Lore: Spirit 3, Mortality 3, Realms 2

MARI BETH MOLDEN (RAVANA)

In the time that followed Caine's crime, Ravana became a creature of nightmares. Most Slayers rebelled at the idea of killing — their affinity with that aspect of nature did not make them murderous. Instead it tended to make them the opposite, but when one became twisted as Ravana, the result was horrifying. She moved through enemy troops like a scythe through wheat, and when there were no battles to be had she hunted the hills surrounding an enemy city to find targets.

Her skill in battle did not escape the attentions of her superiors, and they repeatedly tried to promote her above the rank of Fell Knight, yet Ravana always refused. She had no talent for groups or desire to work with others. She was an isolated and lonely creature who preferred the solitude her rank allowed her to indulge in, and no amount of inducement could persuade her to give up her title. The danger of isolation, however, is that it prevents one from realizing when one has gone to far or when one is breaking away from sanity.



The other benefit it afforded her was the privacy to pursue an idea that occurred to her during the last days of the war when she managed to absorb part of an enemy Angel as she destroyed him. It took her several more efforts to reproduce the effect, but she did manage it again.

Then came the imprisonment in the Abyss and the Torment. Again Ravana's solitary habits made her situation worse than it was for others. She felt all the pain that the other fallen felt, but with no one to share the burden of this pain, she went mad under the burden she bore alone. Every demon avoided her because she was prone to lash out at anything that moved regardless of who it might be, and she found herself wondering if she could absorb the lore of other demons as well as Angels.

Mary Beth Holden was first molested when she was only three. Her father and uncle used her and her sisters to satisfy their needs well into Mary Beth's teens when they died at the hands of Mary Beth's mother who died herself in the attack. This left Mary Beth to the mercies of the local orphanage. Here her lot did not improve because the man in charge used his charges to run a teenage porn ring, and Mary Beth soon became his favorite.

This continued until Mary Beth turned eighteen and became too old to be of use to the counselor. The suddenness of his abandonment her snapped something in her victim mentality, and Mary Beth attacked the counselor with a pair of scissors while he slept. Terrified by what she had done and fully aware of the consequences she stayed, Mary Beth ran away. She hitchhiked her way across America intent on reaching Los Angeles. Along the way she slept with anyone who gave her a ride, chiefly truckers, and hated them for using her.

One night a trucker became rough, and later, as he slept, she cut his throat with his own pocket knife. The moment was one of exhilaration. Like an addict Mary Beth wanted to experience it again, and so the next trucker to pick her up died in a lonely motel room. Leaving bodies behind her like crumbs Mary Beth worked her way west, but the horrors of her life had numbed her and rendered her soul sympathetic to Ravana who easily displaced Mary Beth.

In Los Angeles, Ravana found no place for herself. Spentu Mainyu acknowledged her but gave her no position in the court. Not that Ravana wanted one. She had already been recruited by Manishtsu, and she served the Lord of Murder wholeheartedly. Later, when Spentu Mainyu was helping to form the Blood Court, she was offered the post of Lord General of the Lion Ministry for that court. At Manishtsu's insistence she accepted the post.

Then Ravana met Guanli, who happened to be her opposite number in the Infernal Court. The two fell to talking. It was something neither Ravana nor Mary Beth had ever known — ease of speech and relaxation. No matter what was said to Guanli he was not repulsed,

and in fact when Ravana let slip her idea for absorbing the lore of other fallen Guanli became quite interested. Soon the two decided to work together to experiment with the idea and Ravana was madly in love.

Over the next several months the two worked well together and the love became mutual. Devil's Night was like a holiday for the duo, and by the time it was over they had, counting all their previous victims together, killed and absorbed sixteen fallen. Guanli is still cautious, not wanting to be caught, but Ravana is finding it harder and harder to restrain herself. She is free in a way she never dreamed possible and is most reluctant to go back to the way things were.

Image: Mary Beth is strikingly attractive, with a well-rounded figure and bright, green eyes. Her skin bears numerous scars from her childhood and her life on the road, which she takes some pains to conceal.

Roleplaying Hints: Ravana is an obvious villain. Ravana tends to make people uncomfortable because she tends to sit a little too close when talking and stares a lot. Her voice is quiet, almost impossible to hear in a crowd, and her vocabulary is limited because of her poor education. She is more cunning than she is smart.

Nature: Fanatic

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Intimidation 3, Intuition 3, Medicine 2, Stealth 3, Streetwise 3, Survival 2

Backgrounds: Pacts 2, Paragon 2, Eminence 2, Legacy 2

Willpower: 6

Faith: 9

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Mortality

Lore: Mortality 4, Spirit 4, Realms 3, Fundament 3, Humanity 3

MINOR PLAYERS

MAE WEST (ERISHKAGEL)

Mae West's past is unknown. He first appeared in Hollywood in the late seventies when asexual looks were all the rage. Within months of arriving the young man, due to taking an enormous quantity of LSD, suffered massive brain damage and a severe break with reality. During this time he developed the delusion that he was Mae West.

As time progressed this delusion was encouraged by the counterculture which delighted in watching this mentally deficient man parade around in clumsy drag claiming to be a long dead star from the Golden Age of Hollywood. This sight became even more

comical because Mae West was homeless and had no access to a razor, so he became a bushy-bearded man in a sequined dress and an almost baritone voice.

His brush with death came one night when an unexpected cold snap hit Los Angeles, and Mae West was caught out sleeping under a bridge in a cardboard box. It was Erishkagel who took possession of this sad transient. She did not change any part of his life, and in fact makes excellent use of his degraded stature to watch the comings and goings of the city without attracting undue attention.

In this capacity, Erishkagel works for the Blood Court's Eagle Ministry. With Lady Nasu losing her sanity this Slayer is planning to replace her boss, and so frequently holds back information from Nasu. This only makes Nasu even more ineffective in her job and increases the chances that Erishkagel will assume the role of the Lidless Eye. Like so many others in the Blood Court, Erishkagel is a confirmed Ravener.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 6

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Mortality

Lore: Mortality 3, Spirit 3, Fundament 1

MICHAEL GUTENOV (HEPAT)

Michael Gutenov has been obsessed with death for as long as he can remember. As a child he only enjoyed movies where the hero died or somehow suffered. He enjoyed catching insects and watching their death throes as he stuck them through the body with a pin. When his family got a dog he used to kick the animal and then see if he could lure it back to his side by talking sweetly and offering it a dog biscuit. These cruelties escaped the attentions of his parents who were too busy making money and having affairs.

When his parents died during Michael's eighteenth year, leaving the young man a considerable sum of money, he decided to open a museum dedicated to his favorite subject: death. He wrote to various imprisoned serial killers asking for trinkets. He acquired objects such as original paintings from Gacy and an autographed baseball from Manson, tidbits of questionable taste but of great interest to the booming gothic culture.

Nasu had little difficulty recruiting Michael as a thrall, and together they formed a cult called the Harvesters who eventually gave up studying death passively to pursuing it actively. The primary targets for this cult were the hapless homeless so abundant around the City of Angels, and for a while they acted with impunity, until one night when Michael was stabbed through the chest by a transient who did not wish to go silently into that good night.

Rather than lose this useful thrall completely, Nasu summoned an old friend, Hepat, to assume the emptied shell. Overjoyed to be freed from her millennia of

imprisonment Hepat quickly swore to serve Nasu, and soon the two old friends were harvesting even more souls with their cult. Like her boss in the Eagle Ministry, Hepat is rapidly losing control to his Torment. In the Abyss he had declared for the Cryptics, but together with Nasu he is becoming a Ravener of the worst description.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 7

Torment: 8

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of Mortality

Lore: Mortality 3, Spirit 3, Fundament 1

TRIP-9 (HARAPHAEL)

Trip-9 was born Marvin Bragg in South Central Los Angeles. He grew up in the extreme poverty and violence of that community. He never knew enough about the world to understand that his condition was unusual, or that other opportunities were available outside of South Central. Instead he acclimated himself to the brutality of that life and flourished.

He acquired the nickname Trip-9 for his tendency to carry three 9mm handguns with him at all times, one under each arm and another hooked onto the back of his belt. Like most gang members he was a terrible shot because he never actually practiced with the guns, but rather relied on the intimidation inherent to guns to achieve his ends.

Twice he was convicted of armed robbery, but always served his time quietly and so was granted early parole. Upon his exit from his second prison sentence, Trip-9 was shot by a member of his own gang as revenge for an affair Trip-9 had with the other man's wife. Haraphael took possession of the young man's body and immediately slaughtered the shooter, but this happened at the coming-out party thrown for Trip-9 by his family. So Haraphael's use of his Apocalyptic form happened in full view of dozens of people, which quickly became a legend on the streets, and attracted the attention of Manishtusu.

The Lord of Murder reached the Slayer before the Infernal Court did, and Haraphael became a willing servant to the Earthbound. During the Devil's Night Riots it was Trip-9 and some thralls who defended the Empire Market from the ravages of the riots. This was on the orders of Manishtusu who wanted the wounds of the terrible crime which had happened there to remain an open wound which could torment the community.

Before his escape from the Abyss, Haraphael had never declared for any Faction, but had always leaned towards the Raveners on the principal that if everything had to die anyway then he wanted to be the one wielding the scythe.

Willpower: 5

Faith: 6

Torment: 6

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Spirit

Lore: Spirit 3, Realms 2, Fundament 2

PSYCHO(MOT)

Psycho was a frail child, frequently sick. Even as an adult he never grew past five foot two or weighed more than one hundred pounds. For this physical deficiency he was unmercifully mocked as a lad, and fiercely bullied as a teen. In response Jeremiah Williams, for that was his name, developed a ferocious temper and a propensity for using weapons at the least provocation.

He chose the nickname Psycho for himself and set about making it stick by unnecessarily attacking a number of boys bigger than himself with baseball bats and tire irons, until he was feared and respected as a dangerous man. By the time he was sixteen, he was serving time in the California Youth Authority for murder. He was released at the age of twenty-one and was well on his way back to prison although this time as an adult when he was gunned down by a rival gang.

He was shot in the front yard of his girlfriend's house where he was visiting to see his daughter when the automatic rifle began shooting. By the time the shooting was done all three (father, mother and child) were lying in a bloody pool on the porch, but Psycho did not stay down. Mot had taken possession of the body.

The Slayer Mot was a terror of the war, and in this new incarnation he found the perfect vehicle to continue with his pastime of genocide. Mot had been an open supporter of Manishtsu during the war, and chance brought the two back together now. Mot serves the Lord of Murder as his chief protector in the Nickerson Garden Projects.

Willpower: 6

Faith: 6

Torment: 7

Apocalyptic Form: The Visage of the Realms

Lore: Realms 3, Mortality 2, Humanity 2

**BIT PLAYERS****PETER GOLD(BASHEMATH)**

When Brother Gold became the minister of the Crystal Congregation, a neo-Unitarian church in Pasadena, his message is simple: God rewards humankind based on their faith. Strong Christians receive earthly wealth and physical health as proof of their faithfulness. "If you have the faith of an immortal being, you will never die!" His congregational ranks swelled with the terminally ill striving for the necessary spiritual strength. Peter enjoyed all the benefits afforded him as minister of a profitable church when he himself was diagnosed with cancer. As Brother Peter's essence shattered under the realization that his own faith was insufficient, Basemath stepped into Gold's mortal shell.

Basemath believes that death is a reminder of man's original sin and envisions nothing less than a return to Eden. Congregation members proselytize patients at clinics and hospitals, and Basemath's sermons are televised each Sunday.

DEE ANSON(SHEMAIAH)

Shemaiah had always been alone. Even for a Slayer, she had remarkable difficulty interacting with others. During her millennia of hellish imprisonment, Shemaiah realized that she had joined Lucifer's rebellion out of a need to belong — even when her involvement had mortalized the humans she adored. When she awoke to find herself a homeless outcast, something broke deep within. Dee Anderson had cared only for the heroin that eventually destroyed her mind, but Shemaiah hovered about the crowded places where tourists shopped and laughed. Whenever she could catch a mortal's eye, she gave them a gift. To some she gave the knowledge that a beloved child would die unborn, to some, whispered messages from a relative years dead. Soon the police avoided speaking and locals studied the sidewalk when she passed. Her progress along any given street is marked by the gasps of her victims.

NIGEL MOORCOCK(IRSHEMESH)

Nigel Moorcock was an aspiring actor. Supporting himself by posing on the street in haunting vignettes, he won some local fame for his portrayal of the angel Gabriel. He stumbled upon a gang of youths harassing an elderly woman, and rashly intervened. His face slashed and all hope of an acting career gone, Nigel tried to kill himself and Irshemesh possessed the body. A minor player in the war, Irshemesh concluded that God's plan was still in action and that the fallen still had roles to play.

Garbed in Nigel's most famous costume, Irshemesh seeks the fracture points of human society. He reveals his fearsome glory to criminals and victims alike, convincing

them that demons are real. Among the squalid tenements north of LA residents whisper that the Angel of Death is come and that the Apocalypse is at hand.

RONNI PARKS (BIZJOTHJA)

Bizjothja possessed Medical Examiner Ronni Parks when she offered herself as a vessel for any being that could bring justice to her daughter's killer. Four-year-old Jessica was kidnapped from the daycare playground, and when her mutilated body was found two weeks later in the desert, Jessica's grieving mother insisted on attending the autopsy. The evidence of rape and torture was horrific. There was no human witness. But Bizjothja was able to coax the dead child's spirit into revealing her killer's name and both mother and demon took great satisfaction in his destruction.

Now Bizjothja uses her skills to assist the police, and she uses her position as Medical Examiner to search for answers. Her sojourn in Hell was enough to curb any impulsive reactions. She is determined to find out as much information as possible before choosing sides this time.

ISABELLA LIND (JAHALEEL)

She fell ill on her third birthday and was rushed to the hospital before blowing out the candles on her cake. "Poor Bella," the nurses murmured. It took about two weeks for the poison Mommy placed in her milk each night to be purged, but as soon as she came home again little Bella became sick. At five, she lost her hair — at six, her teeth. Then Bella started breaking bones. Once she tripped over Mommy's foot and fell down the stairs. "Don't move without Mommy's help," said Daddy. So Bella stopped moving completely — didn't eat, didn't talk, didn't think.

Jahaleel came after that. Angry Jahaleel knew what it was to be punished and hurt by those she trusted. Now Mommy is sick, and Daddy — and all the children at school. Jahaleel always gives them what they want — almost. The sooner this sick world ends, the better for everyone.

RAUL LOPEZ (BARAK)

Once Barak was the shining hero — Achilles to Lucifer's Odysseus. In the War, none stood before him, and unlike his fellows, Barak reveled in his tasks. "Why should we set the humans above all other creation? It is good that they also should die and allow the species to progress." Known and respected, feared and revered, Barak stood close to Lucifer at the end.

Graduate-student Raul Lopez first heard the voices speaking to him in his twentieth year. The radio warned him that his parents planned to kill him, so he shot them first. In the hospital, a broken Raul received antipsychotics but it was difficult to function through the medication and guilt. Then Barak found entrance and orchestrated an escape. The spirits of the dead were attuned to this mortal shell, and they whispered to Barak in millions of voices, visited him in thousands of forms. "Kill the mortals. Kill the Earth. Armageddon is nigh."

JOYCE ALLEN (YIGAL)

At the dawn of the Great War, a family of humans befriended the fallen Yigal. Slayers had ever been outcasts amongst the Elohim, but amongst the Children of Elias she felt acceptance. When God's curse of mortality befell Elias and his kin, Yagil offered Elias a token of her love. "Throughout time I will watch your children. Mine shall be the only hand which raises them, and the only hand which guides them home." Consigned to hellish torment, Yigal most regretted the breaking of that promise.

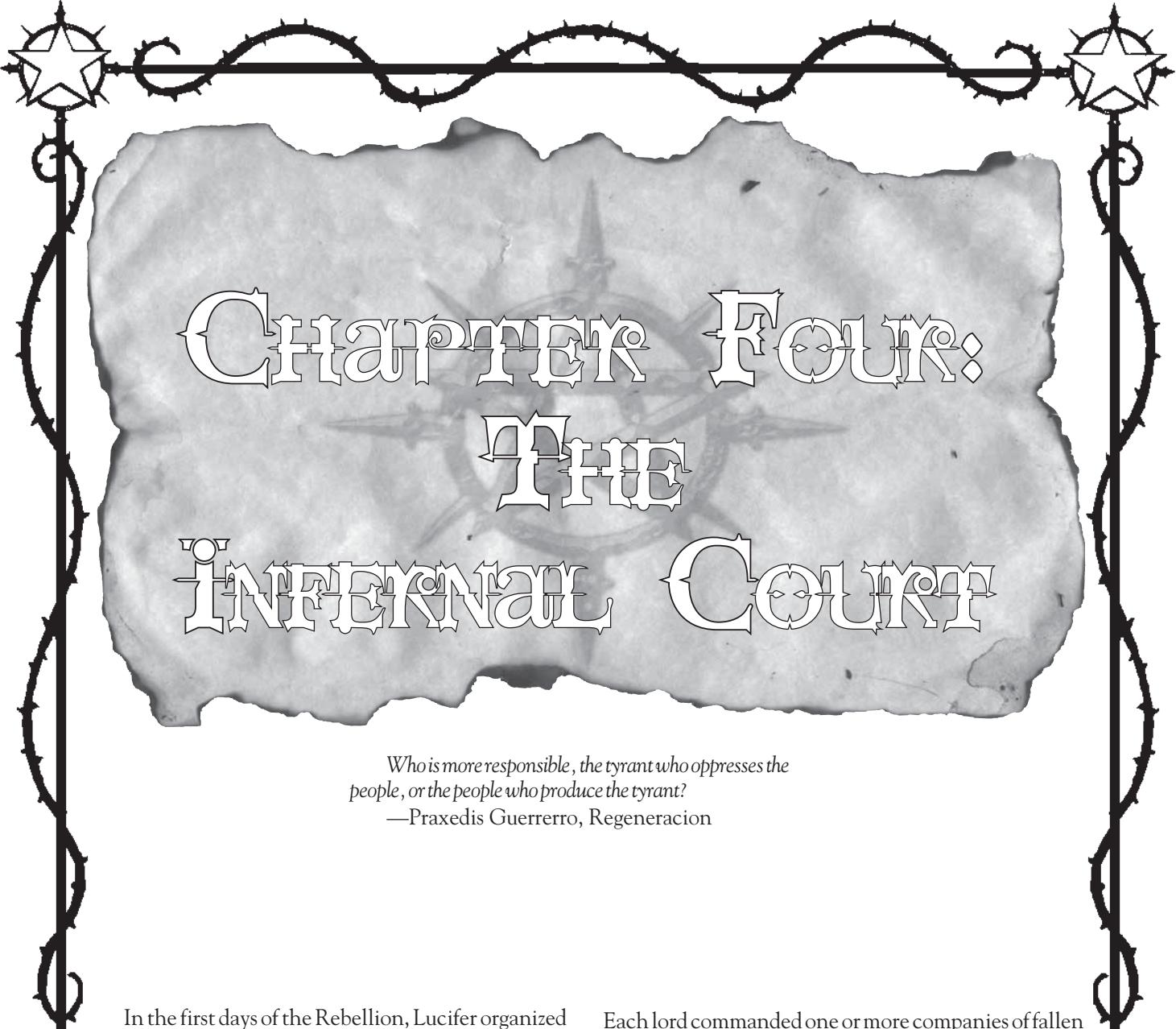
Yigal possessed the body of Joyce Allen, wife of a local politician, after her attempted suicide. While Joyce had been worn down by the banality around her, Yagil was astounded by humanity's collective potential. Pushing Joyce's husband onto a national stage, Yagil exerted her political influence to benefit favored charities—the Terminal Children's Fund and a personal program for at-risk teens. True to a promise millennia-old, she searches for Elias's progeny.

FRED JACOBS (GAVRIL)

They say photographs capture the soul. Fred Jacobs lived by night, traveling the streets of LA, searching for his next subject. Fred's timing was uncanny. He had made a name for himself—a black photographer in a time when it was white man's work—by capturing spirit amongst the squalor. But time took its toll. Long nights away from his wife ruined his marriage, and long hours walking the streets dissolved into long days drowning regrets at the bar.

Hell had done nothing to dampen Gavril's idealistic beliefs. The human soul's unparalleled beauty was worth any price. Refining Fred Jacob's vision, Gavril sought the moment of death, and eased men over the threshold while capturing their passage on film. Images of true belief shining through the eyes of death have become internationally popular. Jacobs is now in great demand.





CHAPTER FOUR: THE INFERnal COURT

Who is more responsible, the tyrant who oppresses the people, or the people who produce the tyrant?

—Praxedis Guerrero, *Regeneracion*

In the first days of the Rebellion, Lucifer organized the fallen into five legions, and gave them dominion over the Earth and its creatures. Each legion was organized into a distinct, but egalitarian hierarchy. The commander of the legion was an archduke and master of one fifth of the world, second only to the Morningstar himself, first among equals. Below the archdukes came their dukes, who held sway over entire continents in the name of their archduke. These dukes were served in turn by a number of powerful barons, each one overseeing a vast principality. Below them overlords were responsible for numerous cities and villages each administered in turn by a fallen lord.

Each lord commanded one or more companies of fallen warriors through their champions and lieutenants, the fell knights, who presided over the many proud bastions defending the lord's territory and led the charge against the forces of the enemy.

Unlike the Heavenly Host, one's position within the legions of the fallen was not fixed. Promotions to the higher ranks — or demotions for some failing — were expected and common, particularly among the lower ranks. While it was rare for an overlord or baron to be displaced, lords and fell knights often saw promotion, particularly as superiors were themselves promoted, or fell in battle and needed to be replaced.





The legions were not timeless and permanent like the Hosts of Heaven, but ever changing, adapting to the needs of the war.

Their duty to humanity uppermost in their minds, the fallen arranged themselves into courts to administer, oversee, and protect their mortal charges. The purpose of these feudal courts was to support the local fallen tyrant and provide the resources necessary for him to carry out his duties, including protecting the mortal populace, marshalling the local warriors to join the forces of the legion in battle, and administering the resources of his region for the use of the legions. Thus, a fallen knight typically ruled a particular village or settlement as its tyrant. He organized his vassals, anywhere from 10 to 100 low-ranking fallen, to see to the needs of the village and its people, the protection of the area, and was personally responsible for the fitness of all of the troops under his command when his lord summoned them to fight on behalf of their legion. The duties of each court, regardless of size, were broken down and administrated through the offices of five different ministries, each with their own internal organization that supported and to some extent paralleled the court's structure. The heads of these five ministries comprised the *pentarchy*, an advisory council that reported to the local tyrant on the state of the court and made recommendations to higher courts on local matters of succession if the tyrant was promoted, demoted or slain.

THE INFERNAL COURT

Whatever else the fallen became in the blackness of the Pit, they remain creatures of hierarchy and order, compelled to define their possessions, duties and rank relative to the other demons in their vicinity. Restoring the court system upon their release was second nature to many fallen, particularly in the face of outside threats such as demon-hunters and the implacable Earthbound. Since the highest-ranking fallen remain bound by the chains of the Abyss, many of these nascent courts have grown up around dutiful lords or fell knights seeking to pave the way for the return of their feudal masters, while other demons see the chaos of the current situation as a golden opportunity to claim rank and authority far beyond their once-lowly station.

The infernal court is still the heart of fallen society, and any demon who aims to get ahead must become involved with courtly politics sooner or later. Although their traditional roots stretch back quite far, the current infernal courts are all still in their infancy, offering plenty of opportunities for ambitious demons to secure positions of power and influence for the first

time. Currently the courts are still taking shape in many cities, with more and more demons appearing and claiming what they consider their rightful place among the emerging hierarchy.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COURT

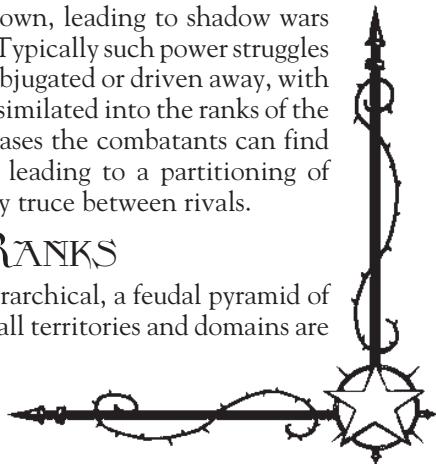
There are numerous infernal courts taking shape across the World of Darkness, from the small holdings of a fell knight to the domain of a would-be duke. Each lesser court owes fealty to one above it, and so forth on to the summit of the demonic hierarchy. Thus the larger courts are always made up of smaller courts, each with their own areas of interest and influence. The greatest infernal courts across the world contain wheels within wheels; a vast maze of interlocking loyalties and duties among the demon lords and their subordinates.

Of course, a would-be tyrant can only claim as much territory as he has the strength and the courage to hold. Most holdings cover no more than a single city, neighborhood or street, and rival courts frequently arise to vie for control of a particularly valuable locale. Without the added might of a feudal superior to bolster their authority, modern tyrants are more dependent than ever on their ministers and their agents to solidify their control. What is more, they must always be on guard against more powerful rivals, particularly neighboring lords seeking to expand their realm. The difference between bending one's knee to a new master and adding new vassals to one's kingdom depends on equal measures of adroit diplomacy, cunning strategy and brutal applications of force.

Most modern courts claim little more than a neighborhood within a larger city or the entirety of a small, isolated town —only a rare few hold sway over entire cities and the territory immediately beyond. While a court can theoretically claim authority over all of the fallen within its domain (including those simply passing through), in practice there are various independents, outcasts, renegades, and others (particularly the Earthbound) who exist beyond the court's reach. In some cases, more than one court will claim a particular area as their own, leading to shadow wars between the two rivals. Typically such power struggles end when one rival is subjugated or driven away, with prisoners or survivors assimilated into the ranks of the victor, though in rare cases the combatants can find themselves stalemated, leading to a partitioning of territories and an uneasy truce between rivals.

THE RULING RANKS

Fallen society is hierarchical, a feudal pyramid of loyalties and duties. Small territories and domains are



overseen by fell knights, who owe their loyalty to local lords, who owe their loyalty in turn to their overlord, the baron, and finally their duke. Each rank in the social order has a particular function and oversees a particular level of demon society, though their numbers and influence vary widely in the modern World of Darkness as some among the fallen lay claim to titles and authority without the sanction of their masters.

ARCHDUKE

The highest-ranking demons in Creation next to Lucifer himself, the five archdukes were chosen by the Morningstar to command his legions in the war against Heaven. These fearsome angels — Belial, Abaddon, Dagon, Asmodeus and Azrael — each held sway over a fifth of the infernal host, and the entire world was divided up between them. Each archduke held absolute power over millions of souls, both human and fallen, and tens of millions of square miles of the virgin earth.

The five archdukes vanished at some point after their imprisonment in the Abyss, drawn from the Pit by forces unknown to the fallen. In the wake of their disappearance, many powerful dukes vied for their place as the penultimate leaders of the fallen, but their efforts only succeeded in further splintering the loyalties of the infernal host. To date, no escaped demon has dared claim the title of archduke for himself, doubtless aware that such a presumption would demand a challenge from every tyrant within his purported domain.

DUKE

During the War of Wrath an archduke was served by a council of trusted dukes who acted as his lieutenants and commanded the Legion's largest corps. These angels commanded the loyalty of hundreds of thousands of fallen and watched over an equal number of mortals across the breadth of entire continents. With the disappearance of the archdukes, these demons are the highest-ranking fallen remaining in the Abyss, and their struggles for dominance have only grown more intense in the wake of the great Maelstrom.

To date, no demon loose upon the earth has the level of power and authority sufficient to claim the title of duke, though to many presumptive barons stretching their talons across the globe, it's only a matter of time.

BARON

During the war the Legions' many brigades were commanded by the barons of the host, each one commanding tens of thousands of rebel angels and governing thousands of square miles of territory plus

the human flocks that lived there. There were hundreds of barons serving in the infernal host at the height of the war, and this was the highest rank that saw any turnover during the fighting. Those barons who survived the war remain trapped in the Pit, but in several major cities such as London, Paris, Los Angeles and New York, one or more demons have assumed the title as a right of conquest. Such barons typically maintain a personal retinue of 10 or more fallen and command the loyalty of as many as 50 to 75 other demons within the environs of a city and its surrounding suburbs — a far cry from the glories of old but still a formidable kingdom in the desperate times at hand.

OVERLORD

During the war, the fallen overlords commanded each of the Legions' numerous battalions, holding authority over several hundred angels and several hundred square miles of terrain, including fallen bastions and human settlements. Overlords were closer to the routine affairs of the fallen masses in general, the bridging the gap between the lower ranks of lords and knights and the higher ranks of the barons and dukes, and were frequently employed as liaisons and advocates for this reason. None of the host's surviving overlords have yet managed to escape from the Pit, though there are scores of fallen who claim the title across the globe, either as a reward for supporting the authority of a presumptive baron within a large city or by subjugating a group of weaker lords and claiming control of a medium-sized city or a group of small villages or towns. A typical overlord maintains a small retinue of eight to ten fallen and can command the fealty of 15 to 25 other demons within his sphere of influence.

Overlords are often also the lords of a particular part of their domain, making them "first among equals" in the lords of the region. This means that overlords often double their duties as both local lords and regional overlords. The lord of the largest town in a region may also be that region's overlord, for example. This means that there are opportunities for ambitious lords to become overlords, particularly if they garner enough support in their region.

LORD

Lords make up the backbone of the ruling class of the fallen. During the war most fallen lords commanded a company of several hundred rebel angels and a number of fortresses and watchtowers covering enough territory for a small country — now, most fallen lords claim little more than a single city or collection of small towns as their own. Each lord's infernal court is a center of activity for the fallen in that area. The

demon lord maintains order in the bounds of the court and handles matters such as enforcing the edicts of the higher ranks, integrating newly-returned demons into the court, dealing with renegades and potential enemies, and managing the court's resources. The lord does this with the aid of the five ministries, and a number of reliable retainers and underlings. A typical lord in the modern World of Darkness maintains a small retinue of up to five fallen and can command the fealty of up to 10 to 15 demons within his sphere of influence. A handful of demon lords have escaped the Abyss since the advent of the Maelstrom, and many fallen of low rank have assumed the title since gaining their freedom, resulting in dozens of petty fiefdoms scattered across the globe.

While infernal lords wield a considerable amount of power within their own domain, they are also frequently beholden to the court of a more potent demon in the area, which means that many lords are under almost constant scrutiny, and must perform their duties well or else their liege-lord may decide to have them replaced. Lords of less important areas tend to get away with more, but also have fewer resources and less prestige within the infernal courts.

FELL KNIGHT

The lowest ruling rank among the fallen are the fell knights, demons who have risen from the lower ranks by virtue of skill and heroism on the field of war. Fell knights are typically the primary vassals of fallen lords, commanding small bands of demons and overseeing the bastions and settlements of the domain, but they are also commonly found serving as champions in the retinue of higher-ranking nobles. They may control small domains of their own, such as a particular neighborhood or district, or they may oversee particular affairs within their lord's domain, such as marshalling soldiers in its defense, maintaining order, enforcing the lord's will, and similar duties. New knights are created at the lord's will from the lower ranks of the fallen, and knighthood is often a promised reward for faithful service. Most fell knights command the loyalty of a handful of retainers in addition to the territories they are charged with protecting, and in times of war may be placed in command of larger groups of fallen and human allies by their liege lord.

The liege-lord assigns a knight's duties, although many knights are also tasked with serving the various ministries that help run the court. Whereas knights were nearly always troop-leaders and military governors during the war, they have many other duties now. The use of overt force is rare for the infernal courts, so knights who play the political and social games well are sure to advance in the courts' service.

THE LOWER RANKS

Beneath the ruling ranks of the fallen are the majority of demons, who offer their loyalty to the infernal court, obey the court's edicts and rules, and otherwise go about their business, trying to curry the court's favor and avoid its wrath as much as possible. Most of the fallen are in this category: returned in mortal flesh and struggling to regain some measure of the power and knowledge they once knew by gathering faith to sustain themselves.

Promotion to the higher ranks of the court comes in one of two ways. The first is at the pleasure of the demon's superiors, who may grant virtually any rank below their own, although the decision can always be reversed by a higher-ranking demon, if it meets with their disapproval. The upper ranks hold out the possibility of reward to keep their underlings loyal and hardworking, at least when they think there's a chance of earning a higher rank.

The other means of achieving rank within the court is by seizing it, usually by arranging a coup of some sort against a ranking demon and taking on that position. If a demon gathers enough popular support the courts have little choice but to recognize the upstart's claim to a position of power and influence. Of course, not all of the fallen are so ambitious, or desire a position of power within the court. They are also aware that a failed gambit to acquire power can lead to exile, either outside the court or a return to the Abyss, a fate all demons most fervently wish to avoid.

Fallen in the lower ranks can still wield a measure of power, perhaps even great power. For example, the ministers within the court hold power and influence, even though they do not necessarily possess ruling rank. The ministers of the grand courts of the presumptive overlords and barons are among the most influential of demons. Many ministers prefer their positions behind the throne rather than upon it, feeling that it offers them more protection when there is a figurehead to draw the attention of would-be usurpers.

RULESHIP AND REGENCY

While the ministries and functionaries of the court ensure that it runs smoothly and efficiently, the leadership and ultimate responsibility for the court rests in the hands of its ruler, formally known as the *tyrant*. Though a court's tyrant possesses great influence and authority within his own domain, he also knows that his every move is being watched by those



THE NOBLE RETINUE

Like mortal nobles and modern celebrities, demons of rank maintain retinues of fallen and human thralls who serve as agents, bodyguards and status symbols. Newly-returned fallen are no different, and often a demon's first step on the path to governance begins with the formation of a small retinue to pursue his interests.

Retinues are common among the newly-returned fallen; in some cases former members of a lord's staff will cross the globe to return to the service of their liege, drawn by ancient ties of loyalty and devotion. In other cases, beleaguered fallen will cast their lot with any demon who seems to possess the ambition and the ruthlessness to prosper amid the perils of the modern world. In return for their loyal service, a fallen noble is obligated to reward his followers for their service and devote a portion of his resources to their welfare. This arrangement has taken on even greater significance in the wake of the angels' time in the Abyss and the burden of Torment that most fallen bear. As a lord is responsible for the deeds of his retainers, he is obligated to take action if one of his retinue is at risk of succumbing to her darker nature, and vice versa.

The noble retinue is a good starting point for many **Demon** chronicles, allowing a Storyteller to bring together a diverse group of characters and unify them behind a single goal — service to their infernal lord.

beneath him. One false step and everything he has gained can be torn from his grasp by those who feel themselves better suited to wear the crown.

THE HAND OF THE TURANT

The supreme power over the infernal court rests in the hands of its tyrant, a ranking demon with the support of the ministries and of his superiors, if any. Lucifer himself appointed the original court tyrants, selecting the dukes and barons from the ranks of the rebels. They in turn appointed the overlords, lords, and fallen knights from among their own followers, creating a vast hierarchy that once held the entire world under its sway.

Now most of those demon lords remain locked away in the Abyss, and a new hierarchy has arisen with the return of many of the fallen to Earth. Lower-ranking demons have taken up the roles once occupied by their superiors, assuming higher rank either from a sense of duty or naked ambition. Although many

remain loyal to their trapped leaders, these new demon lords are enjoying their taste of greater power and control. It's quite possible that some may decide that it's to their benefit if their more powerful brethren don't return to the world just yet....

The tyrant of a particular court has both supreme power and ultimate responsibility within it. The demon lord can do largely as he wishes, but must answer to his superiors for his actions. Therefore, most fallen nobles seek to please their liege-lords and carry out their bidding, hoping to raise their esteem and gain status and power. This is true from the lowliest knight to the most powerful overlords. Even the presumptive barons of the new order have responsibilities. They must answer not only to each other but also to the powerful demon lords remaining in the Abyss.

Originally, the lord of a domain was the most capable, and often the most powerful, of the fallen in the region. While this is often still the case, many lords have achieved their new positions through favors, manipulation, or sheer ruthlessness. Some may have even been supported by rivals hoping to set them up for an eventual, and very public, fall.

REGENCY

Generally, each court is ruled by a single tyrant, but if a previous ruler is promoted or falls in battle (or is deemed no longer fit to rule due to incompetence or the effects of Torment), then the next highest-ranking demon lord with authority over that court typically appoints or chooses a successor. In some cases, there is no clear-cut successor, or there is no time for the overlord to choose one. In such cases, the chief ministers of the court assume control of it as regents, sharing authority over the court and its affairs and voting on all decisions among themselves, with a simple majority prevailing. This regency lasts until a new lord is appointed or chosen. Sometimes the matter of succession can take a long while to resolve itself, as higher-ranking nobles vie to fill the spot with one of their loyal followers.

In some courts, regencies have been the solution to unite warring factions unable to decide on a single leader, to help hold the fabric of the courts together. This means that some courts have not just one leader, but five, and that at least three of them must agree in order for anything to get done. While regencies help to deal with some immediate problems of court leadership, they tend to mire the infernal courts in bureaucracy and infighting. It's common for the various ministers to each jockey for position and favor with the overlord, hoping to be appointed as the new lord of the court.

THE REGENCY CHRONICLE

The Regency Chronicle is an ideal choice for players and Storytellers interested in stories of politics, power plays and infernal intrigue. Up to five players can assume the role of ministers charged with maintaining an embattled court and choosing a successor among the domain's scheming lords. If there are less than five players, one or more of the ministers can be controlled by the Storyteller; the Dragon Minister is usually the best choice for this, since it gives the Storyteller an excellent means of keeping the players on their toes. If there are more than five players, then some players may play other high-ranking members of the court, or perhaps even outsiders with the regency's ear.

Alternately, players can take the role of a group of demons planning to *replace* the current lord or regency and take over the court. This is no small task and could easily be the basis for an entire **Demon** chronicle. Perhaps the current lord is secretly allied with a powerful Earth-bound demon. The court's leadership might be too authoritarian and unable to adapt to the demands of the modern world. Or perhaps the players' characters are simply ambitious and power-hungry or think they can do a better job of running things.

Regents quickly become experts in shifting responsibility and blame onto each other, making it more difficult for their liege-lord to discipline them without upsetting the balance of the court. This tends to lead to complex power games among the ministers of a regency, and it encourages other ministers in other courts to consider the possibility of a regency of their own, if only their troublesome leader were to suffer from some unforeseen accident....

THE PENTARCHY

For all his or her power, no tyrant can truly govern without the support of his council of ministers, known as the *pentarchy*. This council system, created by Lucifer shortly after the founding of the legions, was intended to provide a structure that ensured each court fulfilled its duties to the best of its ability and created a chain of command and control that existed in parallel to the rule of the feudal lords. The ministers of the pentarchy meet with their tyrant regularly to discuss matters pertaining to the court and the tyrant's domains, inform their lord of new developments and advise him with respect to changes in policy or the enactment of new laws. They are also

charged with determining matters of succession, and can vote to depose a sitting tyrant on grounds of incompetence or treason. Such a vote must be unanimous, and pentarchs choose such a course of action with great care, as their own positions (and freedom) can depend on it.

Traditionally the tyrant has the right to select the members of the court's pentarchy, and can be dismissed without reason or explanation. In practice, however, the choice of ministers is often heavily influenced by the tyrant's own liege-lord and the ministers of the higher-ranking court, as there are few fallen willing to pass up the chance to stack the court of their subordinates with their own loyal agents.

THE MINISTRIES

Every infernal court is supported by five infernal ministries, a system created by the Morningstar himself to ensure efficient employment of resources and consistent communications between the often Byzantine layers of court politics. Each ministry has a particular duty that it performs to aid the tyrant of the court, from intelligence gathering to interactions with humanity. Ideally the ministries work together for the good of the court, but the truth is that they are as riddled with corruption and internal rivalries as everything else touched by the fallen, so they often vie with each other over their individual agendas.

The organization and lines of authority within each ministry exist in parallel to the feudal authority imposed by the infernal courts. Ministers and their agents are members of the court and individually subject to the tyrant's edicts like everyone else, but the ministries' internal affairs and operations are sacrosanct, and a tyrant interferes with them at his peril. This is long-standing law and custom designed to keep ministry affairs separate from the taint of courtly intrigue, and for the most part the system remains effective.

Typically, the vast majority of ministerial agents are drawn from the lower classes of the fallen, ostensibly to remove the distractions of rank and courtly politics — and the influence of corrupt tyrants. Senior ministers themselves tend to be of noble rank, though in theory these individuals are forbidden to rule over any territory or accept the fealty of lesser nobles or other demons. In practice this stricture is often ignored, especially in smaller courts where a tyrant needs every noble demon available to manage his domain, and few fallen are so high-minded that they would turn down an offer of subordinates and territory to call their own.

THE MINISTRY OF EAGLES (THE WATCHERS)

The demons of the Ministry of Eagles are often referred to simply as The Watchers, for their primary role is the collection of information and intelligence on the enemies of the court and the fallen as a whole. The Ministry of Eagles specializes in gathering and organizing information of all kinds, employing every method from powerful evocations to the sharp eyes and ears of well-placed thralls. The fallen understand that information is vital to their survival and success in the modern world — although they are privy to the secrets of Creation, demons have also been out of touch for some time and need to become familiar with the current state of affairs in the modern world. The experiences and memories of their mortal hosts allow the fallen to fit into human society without too much difficulty, but there is still a great deal for them to learn.

Originally the fallen of the Ministry of Eagles were scholars and teachers, keepers of knowledge and lore, they were also scouts and spies during the war. The Watchers are the eyes and ears of the court, both in the mortal world and within the court itself. High-ranking Watchers control networks of fallen and mortal agents that report to them. They in turn present information to the head of the Ministry of Eagles, the Most Vigilant Watcher, who chooses what information to share with the tyrant and his court. The Eagle Minister's ability to provide or withhold information is considerable, but woe-betide the Watcher caught withholding information vital to the court.

Naturally, the fallen guard their words and actions carefully around the eagle-eyed Watchers. There is a complex game of misdirection and misinformation played amongst the various factions and notables of the court, each trying to feed the Ministry of Eagles select scraps of information, some true, others false, hoping that will lead things in the direction that they want. The Ministry of Eagles is aware of this and plays the game as well, sorting the useful kernels of intelligence from the chaff.

The Ministry of Eagles is responsible for other sorts of knowledge as well. They are scholars and lore-keepers who advise other members of the court, often for a price, depending on the value of the knowledge they possess. Watchers are fascinated with the potential of modern information technology, particularly computers and the Internet, and are taking steps to utilize them to full advantage. The Ministry of Eagles includes philosophers among its ranks, those who speculate on and study the nature of Creation to unravel some of its mysteries: either things that the fallen have forgotten because



HOUSES AND FACTIONS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF EAGLES

Of the demonic houses, the Fiends are the most prevalent within the Ministry of Eagles. Their penchant for prophecy and lore keeping, along with their reputation for playing with the strands of fate, make them formidable Watchers. Some believe that the Fiends are responsible for ensuring that some of the predictions of the Ministry of Eagles come to pass, and their lore grants the ministry influence greater than just knowledge.

Slayers also are common Watchers, although their focus tends to be more on the spirit world than the realm of the living. They gather information from the souls of the dead and other creatures that exist outside mortal ken. Devils and Defilers make effective Watchers operating in the mortal world, able to go where they please and acquire secrets from almost anyone, given time. The remaining houses are roughly equally represented in the Ministry of Eagles, with the Scourges and Devourers primarily focused on gathering tactical information, and the Malefactors interested in technical information (and the potential applications of computer technology).

The Cryptic faction has many adherents within the Ministry of Eagles, since curiosity and a thirst for knowledge are useful qualities for a Watcher. Some ministers are ever alert for clues and obscure bits of lore that help to fill in the puzzle concerning the Creator's motives and role in the drama that is now playing out. While aiding the court, these Watchers also seek to see the pattern of God's plan.

The Luciferans are also common Watchers, although they are watching for something different. They seek information about the fate of their inspiration and leader, the whereabouts of Lucifer. They seek this information knowing that it can change the balance of fallen society and, they hope, lead to stronger leadership and a completion of the work that began with the rebellion.

of their long imprisonment or apparent incongruities that have developed since they have been away. The experiments and inquiries of these demon scholars are limited only by the leaders of the court, and only then if they find out about them.

THE MINISTRY OF AUROCHS (THE WARDERS)

The Ministry of Aurochs is made up of demons primarily concerned with the defense of the court and

the enforcement of its laws. The Warders are entrusted with the safety of the court and its members; during the war this meant protecting high-ranking fallen against their enemies, serving as bodyguards and a first line of defense. In the modern world, the Warders most often protect the court from other demons looking to cause trouble, although they work with the Ministry of Dust to protect the court from any dangers originating in the mortal world as well.

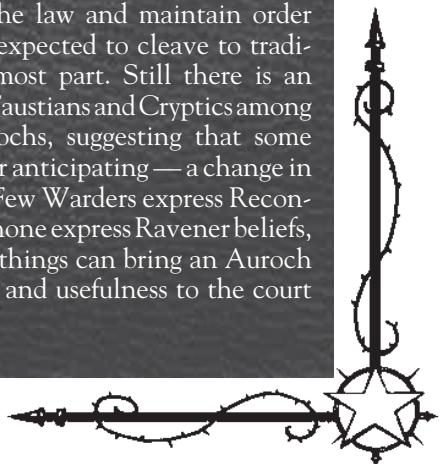
Demons willing to put themselves on the line for others may seem incongruous, but the Warders do their duty because it is necessary for the court to survive and because they gain prestige and influence from their work. Without the support of the Ministry of Aurochs, a demon court would become easy prey for its enemies. The Warders know this, and hold it as an unspoken threat to the other ministries.

HOUSES AND FACTIONS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF AUROCHS

The seven Houses are about equally represented within the Ministry of Aurochs, partly because its duties resonate with each House for different reasons and partly to ensure a measure of fairness, so no one House predominates.

Fallen of each House view the Ministry of Aurochs in their own way, but they all focus on the traditions and laws of the infernal court. Each House, in its way, tries to protect the court from its own nature. Devils are cunning legal analysts and jurors, while Defilers understand motivation and desire better than any others do. Scourges have a sense for weaknesses in any structure, including the court. Malefactors try to keep the court's legal machinery running smoothly, fixing any problems that crop up. Fiends foresee problems and steer things to avoid them. Devourers are staunch defenders of the rule of law, while Slayers quietly shield the court from spiritual dangers.

Luciferans, the most traditionalist faction, is the strongest within the Ministry of Aurochs. Those who uphold the law and maintain order within the court are expected to cleave to traditional ways for the most part. Still there is an increasing number of Faustians and Cryptics among the Ministry of Aurochs, suggesting that some fallen are seeking—or anticipating—a change in the traditional ways. Few Warders express Reconciler sympathies, and none express Ravener beliefs, at least openly. Such things can bring an Auroch Minister's objectivity and usefulness to the court into grave doubt.



Agents of the Ministry of Aurochs also serve the court in a more social role. As their name implies, the Aurochs are stubborn traditionalists. It's their duty to uphold the rules, traditions, and customs of the court, to be the binding force that holds things together. This means that the Warders are staunchly conservative when it comes to following tradition, and they're nearly always against changing the way things are done unless there's an obvious and pressing need (and even then, they're reluctant to do so).

The Warders serve as the enforcers of tradition and the edicts of the pentarchy. They are the judges of the demon court, but they must weigh their actions against the influence of the other ministries and the ranking demons with the authority to override the Ministry of Aurochs' decisions. The Warders interpret and enforce the law. Of course, that allows them opportunities to make exceptions on their own behalf, but there are rewards for any demon who catches a Warder breaking the rules, so the Ministry of Aurochs must be circumspect in its indulgences.

THE MINISTRY OF LIONS (THE SWORDS)

The Ministry of Lions complements the Ministry of Aurochs as much as it competes with it for influence within the court. Whereas the Ministry of Aurochs is charged with the general defense of the court, the Ministry of Lions makes up the court's elite soldiers, warriors, and generals. The Swords combine valor with bloodlust and a hunger for conflict of all sorts. They're often seen as a blunt instrument the court wields against its enemies, but the Swords can be as careful and deliberate as a scalpel, neatly cutting away any emerging threat to the court or the fallen as a whole.

Martial pursuits are naturally the focus of the Ministry of Lions. They're warriors, first and foremost, prepared to take the field at the court's command and destroy its enemies. In the war, all of the fallen were capable and valiant warriors, but circumstances in the modern world present a different set of challenges. Outright violence is a weapon the court must wield carefully in order to avoid drawing unwanted attention. Fortunately the mortal world is filled with daily incidents of violence, so many that mortals have learned to overlook and ignore them, or at least explain them away. The Ministry of Lions often acts under the guise of a gang-war, syndicate hit, mugging, or other "random" act of violence.

The Swords are also the strategists of the court. They know how to tackle problems head-on, so their plans and advice are useful for many things, not just military matters. This makes the Ministry of Lions

HOUSES AND FACTIONS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF LIONS

The Devourers are the most common members of the Ministry of Lions because of their dedication to the arts of warfare. Many of the ministry's finest tacticians and soldiers come from this House, along with some of its most fervent and dedicated (some might say fanatical) members. The Devils often find their way into positions of leadership through this ministry. Scourges and Slayers are the next more commonly represented Houses. Scourges find an outlet for their destructive natures through service in the Ministry of Lions, while Slayers live up to their reputations as grim angels of death. Members of both Houses also use their insights in safeguarding charges from death and disaster.

Malefactors of the Ministry of Lions are typically weapon-makers, specializing in arms and armaments. They develop new ways for the Swords to strike, and new means to protect them. Modern weapon and armor technology has proven both a challenge and fascination for them. Defilers tend to disdain the more martial aspects of the Ministry of Lions, but still put their talents to excellent use as bodyguards and infiltrators, able to apply the sort of subtlety that others might not expect from the Swords. Likewise, the Fiends in the Ministry lend their talents to tipping the odds in the Swords' favor and foreseeing any potential difficulties so they can be dealt with.

The Luciferan and Faustian factions dominate the Ministry of Lions. The Luciferans are good soldiers, loyal to the cause and memory of their leader and inspiration. The Faustians are a bit more practical, seeing the ministry as a means of carving out and defending new dominions in the world. Any demon who wants to rise through the ranks can use the support of the Swords to back up his claim.

Fairly few Inquisitors or Reconcilers are found in the Ministry of Lions although there are some truth-seekers and idealists among the ranks. Of greater concern are rumors of Raveners among the Swords, and stories that the Ministry of Lions is the most prone to be drawn toward the nihilist philosophy of the Raveners. Officially, the ministry and the fallen leadership do what they can to root out any Raveners, but the truth is that they are difficult to find, and the infernal courts cannot afford to lose too many of their best warriors, so such things are often overlooked, at least for now.



the natural leaders of the court, although the influence and expertise of the other ministries tempers their leadership, and they all follow the will of the lord of the court. The Lion Minister is often the most charismatic and forceful personality in the court, but the other Ministers are careful to keep him or her in check, allowing the Lions free rein when something needs to be done.

Of course, there are times when it's wise to give the Lord-General of the Ministry of Lions enough rope to hang himself. The Swords make excellent dupes, if they're allowed to charge into a situation that's been properly prepared beforehand. The Swords are always on the lookout for such treachery, and they deal with it like they do with anything else that gets in their way: they destroy it utterly.

THE MINISTRY OF DUST (THE GUIDES)

The fourth Ministry is the Ministry of Dust (sometimes known as the Ministry of Man or simply the Guides). During the war these fallen were responsible for seeing to the protection and needs of humanity, the ultimate prize in the conflict. Since the failure of the rebellion and the imprisonment of the fallen in the Abyss, the purpose of the Ministry of Dust has changed.

Currently this Ministry serves as an intermediary between demon and mortal society. Their concern is far less for the good of humanity and more for the advancement of the infernal court.

Guides move between mortal and demon society with ease and exercise influence over particular mortals and human institutions that are of use or interest to the fallen. Demons are keenly aware of both their dependence on and their vulnerability to humanity. While they are still powerful compared to the average mortal, the fallen have only a fraction of their former might, and they are vastly outnumbered by the masses of humanity. Plus some humans who are aware of the existence of demons are capable of causing trouble for the court. The Ministry of Aurochs sees to the court's physical protection, but the Ministry of Dust deals with some potential threats before they can become problems.

Guides are regularly in contact with organizations like the media and law enforcement. They arrange cover-ups, kill potentially troublesome stories or investigations, and subtly divert attention from their own activities by focusing it on their enemies (both demonic and mortal). The Ministry of Dust is capable of arranging for would-be demon-hunters to end up in mental hospitals, pumped full of drugs, in prison, or simply dead.

HOUSES AND FACTIONS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF DUST

The Ministry of Dust is primarily the demesne of the Devils and the Defilers, who rule the roost in a kind of partnership. The Devils are the charming and charismatic leaders of the ministry, able to smoothly coordinate its efforts with the rest of the court and with the vassals of the mortal world. The Defilers act as go-betweens and “handlers” dealing with mortals. Between them, the two present a pretty package that few mortals can resist.

The Malefactors play an important role in the Ministry of Dust. While the Devils and Defilers have what it takes to make deals and handle mortal affairs (often literally), the Malefactors can design and create the many different things that mortals want. They provide some of the most tangible proof of the fallen’s abilities and what they have to offer, giving the other demons of the ministry something to bargain with.

The remaining Houses play their own roles in the Ministry of Dust. The Fiends’ ability to arrange events to suit has proven a tempting commodity, while the Slayers deal with mortals fascinated by death, including those who wish to communicate with souls that have passed on.

Faustians tend to predominate within the Ministry of Dust, keenly aware of the potential within humanity and the opportunity for the fallen who cultivate it. Most see nothing exploitative in their work; they give mortals what they desire in exchange for the power that they need — a fair exchange. Of course, some fallen see the power offered up to them as their due, given all that they sacrificed for humanity.

The Reconcilers faction has considerable quiet support within the Ministry of Dust. Some Guides are sympathetic to the mortals they deal with, or become so after existing in the mortal world for a time. They want to atone for the mistakes of the past and show humanity a new and better way. Of course, they have a considerable amount of human apathy and disbelief to overcome before they can even begin to look forward to their plans for a new Paradise on Earth.

Conversely, the Ministry of Dust is also in charge of cultivating potential sources of faith and mortal vassals. They look for opportunities to increase human belief in the supernatural, nurturing the spark of faith and fanning it into a flame that the fallen can draw upon for power. They use mortals as the court’s agents, everything from cults

and secret organizations to legitimate businesses, criminal gangs, even government officials, and religious figures.

THE MINISTRY OF DRAGONS (THE CENSORS)

The ministries each have their area of expertise and authority, but the fallen were wise enough not to place complete trust in any one ministry for any length of time. Authority is all well and good, and necessary for a court to function, but the fallen gave up unthinking obedience when they chose to rebel against their Lord Creator and follow their own consciences.

Their tendency towards rebellion and questioning authority is reflected in the structure of the infernal court by the presence of the Ministry of Dragons, named for the fearsome visage of the First Rebel, the great Morningstar himself. They are the fifth ministry, and their primary task is to question and challenge authority and to keep the other ministries true to their intended role as servants of the court.

Thus the Ministry of Dragons serve as censors to the other ministries and to the structure of the court in general. They can say the things that everyone is thinking, but do not dare to voice aloud. They are critics who cannot be easily silenced and censors who are always watching for signs of corruption, double-dealing, or betrayal. The truth is that the Ministry of Dragons doesn’t really weed out the corrupt and untrustworthy, merely the stupid, the careless, and the arrogant, which is enough for most demons. They actually encourage the fallen to be more circumspect and cunning in their dealings with each other, since no demon is eager to suffer public sanction, much less caught and punished for their indiscretions. The Dragons represent a kind of demonic Darwinism: those who cannot survive their attention are not worthy of attaining power within the court.

On a more practical level, the Ministry of Dragons investigates matters within the court. While the Watchers are spies and information analysts, and the Warders are judges and interpreters of the law, the Censors are usually the ones to discover a demon’s indiscretions and bring them to the court’s attention. They know a great deal of what goes on within the court and are empowered to investigate others on the authority of the tyrant. Some Dragons maintain a façade of naivete or simple-mindedness that allows them to ask questions no one else would, but no demon mistakes any Dragon for a fool. They may sometimes behave disingenuously, but they aren’t stupid.

Since the Ministry of Dragons is charged with policing their fellow demons, who watches them? Pretty much everyone, since Dragons tend to earn



more than their share of potential enemies, and there are always demons in the court who are delighted by the opportunity to embarrass or bring down one of them, especially a high-ranking one. Of course, potentially damaging information can also be put to good use by ensuring the ministry's cooperation in the future. The Dragons aren't immune to corruption — far from it. They are still demons, after all. They just have to be even more careful than most in their secret dealings, and the Dragons who are good at playing power games behind the scenes are *very* good indeed.

HOUSES AND Factions WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF DRAGONS

All of the Houses are represented within the Ministry of Dragons, with each House having its own particular slant on how the ministry's affairs should be conducted. Devils and Defilers are sly and cunning when it comes to worming their way into others' confidence and uncovering plots or corruption within the court. Scourges and Devourers are far more straightforward, pursuing lines of questioning and investigation. Malefactors and Fiends tend to follow their own arcane methods, making it difficult for others to even understand what they are up to, while Slayers draw upon the resources of the spirit world to aid them in their work.

Naturally, the Luciferan faction is quite well represented within the ministry that owes much to the Morningstar's ideals, but the Censors are also about challenging authority and preconceptions, so they are often drawn to learn more about the various other factions of fallen society, and even take up their causes. There are more than a few Cryptics among the Censors, convinced that there is some greater plan at work, and convinced that they can discover the truth eventually. The other factions are found in smaller proportions, although any Raveners within the ministry carefully conceal their ideals and activities.

MINISTERS

The business of the various ministries within a court is conducted by a cadre of ministerial agents, and their senior ministers, demons appointed to fill certain roles by the lord of the court. Typically, in a small court, the lord will choose and appoint all of the ministerial agents personally, while in a larger court, the lord tends to choose only the senior ministers, allowing them to organize and run their ministries largely as they see fit (although some lords prefer more oversight than others). The ministries (and ministers)

of smaller courts are in some cases appointed by the lord of a higher court, ostensibly for purposes of efficiency, but usually this is simply a matter of politics. Thus, an overlord might appoint the ministers in the courts of each of her lords, to better insure the loyalty of those underlings. This means that the ministries of a court often owe their loyalty to the ministries of larger and more powerful courts as well as (or perhaps instead of) the tyrant of the court.

Ministers are responsible for carrying out the various duties of their ministry, with a senior minister overseeing the activities of a number of deputy ministers, who in turn manage a number of ministerial agents. So a low-ranking agent of the Ministry of Eagles may be tasked with gathering information while a high-ranking deputy minister oversees a vast spy network and delivers reports directly to the senior minister and the lords of the court. Promotion through the ranks was originally based on performance and ability (as well as need when attrition took its toll on the fallen). Currently promotion through the ministries (like the rest of the infernal court) is more a matter of power and influence than competence.

COURTLY TITLES

The fallen are fond of impressive-sounding titles and epithets and the ministries are certainly no exception. Generally, the higher ranking the demon, the more impressive-sounding the title. The fallen commonly gather new names and titles like expensive jewels, but certain titles are considered traditional and are common for the heads of the ministries:

- The senior minister of the Ministry of Eagles is commonly known as "Most Vigilant Watcher" or "The Lidless Eye."
- The senior minister of the Ministry of Aurochs is commonly known as "Honored Warder" or "Lord Harrier."
- The senior minister of the Ministry of Lions is commonly known as "Lord General" (sometimes "Glorious Lord General") or "Fiery Sword."
- The senior minister of the Ministry of Dust is commonly known as "Speaker of the Fallen Tower" or "Guide to the Blind."
- The senior minister of the Ministry of Dragons is commonly known as "Lord Inquisitor."

A minister's full title usually also specifies the particular court he belongs to. So the head of the Ministry of Aurochs of the Court of Los Angeles might be known as "The Most Honored Lord Harrier of the Ministry of Aurochs of the Court of Los Angeles."

Traditions and Rules of the Court

The modern infernal court is based on the structure of the courts the fallen held during the time of the war, and most of its traditions and precepts date from that era. Although the fallen are slowly making adjustments and accommodations for the changes in the world since their imprisonment, things are slow to change, so parts of the court remain archaic and outdated, but still serviceable.

AUTHORITY AND THE RULE OF ORDER

The primary rule of the infernal court is a simple one: the word of those above you in rank is law, and disobedience can and will be punished. The courts were created during a time of war, and the dukes and barons of the fallen were generals and commanders whose word was law. Therefore, they were given ultimate authority over those beneath them, and delegated that authority to their own subordinates. The edicts of the court tyrants are absolute law among the fallen, and are strictly enforced. The same is true of the pronouncements of the barons, overlords, and local lords.

Of course, the fallen are not entirely willing to obey without question, or else the war would not have occurred. They recognize that questions and disputes arise and therefore any demon has the right to appeal a decision to the next highest authority in the fallen hierarchy. A knight who disagrees with his lord's decision may appeal it to the overlord, then to the baron, and on up to the pentarchy. The ruling demons may choose not to hear the appeal, or may not decide in favor of the petitioner, but the opportunity is there, at least.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

The ruling demon of a domain has the right to mete out justice as necessary to maintain order and uphold the commands of his superiors. Usually, tyrants and higher-ranking demons place this authority in the hands of the Ministry of Aurochs to act as judges and decision-makers in most issues. The tyrant will hear some cases directly, either because they are important or because they are too delicate for the Warders to reach a decision without consulting the tyrant first. The local tyrant ratifies all legal decisions and may choose to overturn them and issue a new decision.

INFERNAL LAW

The fallen adhered to a wartime code of ethics, so nearly anything is excusable in the name of the cause,

provided that it doesn't become an issue of contention, leading to a breakdown of morale or unity. In those cases, the leaders of the fallen must act, and swiftly, to maintain order. For the most part, the rules and guidelines of the infernal court are simple ones.

- **Obey the will of your superiors.**

The infernal court is built on a feudal hierarchy, and demons are expected to respect and obey the chains of command. Failure to do so may result in punishment. Of course, the ruling ranks are expected not to abuse their power or authority, or else their superiors may punish them.

- **Respect the territory of others.**

Demons are expected to respect the domains of other fallen, and not to interfere with things like another demon's thralls. This rule prevents all-out conflicts between the fallen within the courts, but is honored more in the breach, as demons strive for control of territory and mortal pawns. Such conflicts are usually subtle, except in cases where a demon has little fear of punishment or the tacit approval of a superior to dispose of a rival as he sees fit. For example, an upstart lord with the support of the local overlord or baron does not need to respect the territorial claims of others in his domain, since they are by definition defying his rightful authority.

- **Protect the security of the infernal courts.**

The fallen have many enemies, and they hold to the wartime standard that cooperation with the enemy is treason. Whatever their individual agendas or conflicts, the fallen are expected to safeguard the infernal courts and their fellow demons from the various threats awaiting them in the mortal world. This includes demon-hunters, servants of the Earthbound, and other potential dangers. It also means that the fallen should not do anything that could cause the masses of humanity to unite against the courts. Thus a measure of subtlety and discretion is required in the court's dealings with mortals.

THE PUNISHMENTS OF HELL

When the rules of the court are broken, the Warders of the Ministry of Aurochs mete out punishment, ratified by the ruling tyrant. Punishments vary based on the offense and the character of the offender. In general, the fallen are reluctant to deplete their numbers too much, since there are only so many of them free of the Abyss. Therefore, current punishments tend to be of a temporary nature.

- **Demotion:** Loss of position, prestige, and power are common punishments levied by the infernal court. In the case of the ruling ranks, demotion to a lower rank is possible, while low-ranking demons may suffer



a loss of resources. In some cases one or more of the demon's thralls must suffer for a failure on the demon's part, depriving the offender of that mortal's faith. Fines and the loss of material possessions are considered suitable wrist-slaps for minor offenses. A demotion may be temporary, such as being assigned scut-work or sent off to a distant court for a time of service, or it may be permanent until the offender earns back her overlord's trust.

• **Compensation:** Demons who cause some harm to others by breaking the rules of the court may be expected to compensate the injured party or parties. This compensation may come in the form of material goods or, more often, a kind of enforced servitude, where the offender is expected to perform some service or offer some assistance to the injured party. Usually, the court sets the exact nature of the compensation, although the court has the latitude to allow the victim to do so, and does in some cases to ensure that the punishment is as unpleasant as possible.

• **Torture:** The fallen are well acquainted with the currency of pain, and use it to pay many of their debts. In cases where a serious chastisement is required, the court may have the offender tortured in any number of ways. Taking on mortal flesh has given the fallen a degree of vulnerability to things like pain, and they're already experts on inflicting it. In fact, some courts have torturers who are masters of their craft and have regular opportunities to practice it on mortals and troublesome demons alike.

• **Exile:** The final and most serious punishment that the infernal court can choose to impose is exiling the offending demon back to the Abyss, through careful and deliberate destruction of the demon's mortal host. The fallen are extremely reluctant to invoke this punishment for a number of reasons. The first is that even the cruellest demon lord knows first hand the terrible torture of exile and imprisonment, and is reluctant to inflict it upon another. The second, and more pragmatic, reason is that the infernal courts often can't afford to lose even a potential troublemaker. Their goal after all is to *free* their kind, not to return them to endless imprisonment.

NEWCOMERS

The opening of the Abyss scattered the fallen far and wide across the world. While many quickly found suitable mortal hosts, others did not do so right away, or found a host in a distant part of the world with no other fallen close by. Some demons even appear to have been displaced in time, appearing later than others. The torment of the Abyss was a timeless eternity, and return to Creation was a wrenching experience. Some demons readjusted quickly, while

others are taking some time to get their bearings. This means many infernal courts deal with a regular number of newcomers, demons newly returned to the world in possession of a mortal host.

Given that the demons' numbers are limited, the courts are quick to seek out these lost souls and bring them back into the fold, particularly before they are found and claimed by renegade demons, the cults of the Earthbound, demon-hunters, or some other faction. Locating newly-returned demons is the duty of the Ministry of Eagles, while retrieving them and bringing them back to the court falls under the duties of the Ministry of Aurochs and its agents. Some demons are more than willing to go to the infernal court while a few are reluctant, and in need of gentle (or not so gentle) persuasion.

Assuming that the newfound fallen is reasonable and in possession of her faculties, integration into the court is fairly quick. The Ministry of Dragons makes an assessment of the newcomer. Demons of formerly high rank are taken to see one of the ruling class appropriate to their status and usually given a suitable place in the hierarchy. This can create some tension when a high-ranking demon returns and displaces an existing demon lord, creating some downward pressure through the ranks. Lower-ranking demons are integrated more easily. They swear their fealty to the lord of the court and a place is found for them.

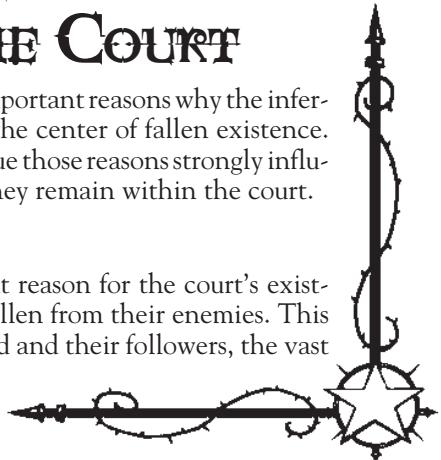
Difficulties arise with fallen who have been severely affected by inhabiting a mortal host. Demons have discovered that the remnants of the mortal's personality and soul can have a serious effect on some of their kind. These demons need to be reminded of who and what they are and of their true purpose, otherwise they are likely to become renegades and leave the court behind (see Chapter Five, p. XX, for more information).

OPPORTUNITIES AND DANGERS WITHIN THE COURT

There are several important reasons why the infernal court continues as the center of fallen existence. How highly demons value those reasons strongly influences whether or not they remain within the court.

SAFETY

The most important reason for the court's existence is to protect the fallen from their enemies. This includes the Earthbound and their followers, the vast



masses of humanity, and the other supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness. It once also included the Hosts of Heaven, and may still, depending on which demons you ask, and what they believe about those who hunt them.

Although they are powerful, the fallen are mere shadows of what they once were, and they know it. There are forces abroad in the world that could destroy them. Even humanity might be able to do so, if they united against the demons. So the fallen huddle for safety behind the protection of the court and the Ministry of Aurochs, with the watchful eyes of the Ministry of Eagles alert for possible threats and the deal-makers and handlers of the Ministry of Dust managing the human vassals who aid and safeguard the court.

Failing to protect the local demons is considered one of the greatest failings of a court, and can easily lead to major changes in leadership. Engineering threats to either unite a court behind its current leaders or behind a new leadership is a common demon ploy, particularly if the plan can direct the court's forces at a particular outside enemy in the bargain.

CONNECTIONS

At the dawn of Creation, the angels each had their assigned duties, their areas of expertise and responsibility. The fallen are used to the idea of working together and needing others to achieve their goals, no matter how much they'd currently like to think otherwise. The court serves as a place for the fallen to gather and meet, to begin building (or, in most cases, rebuilding) and maintaining networks of influence and common interest.

There are only so many demons currently in the world, and many are still confused by the experience of being suddenly thrust into mortal flesh after their ages of terrible exile. The court serves to find these "lost souls" and helps to bring them into fallen society and return them to a full awareness of who and what they are. Of course, there are some demons who decide they don't want to be found, in one way or another, but the court has a responsibility to try and gather the fallen under one aegis so they can find a way to free their brethren from the Abyss.

SUPPORT

It's difficult to go it alone, especially when the fallen may enter into nearly any mortal body. Oftentimes they're unable to maintain the mortal's job or the mortal is presumed dead and has no real possessions or income of any kind. The court offers the fallen resources and support to help them to survive in the world. Although their needs are not the same as

mortals, demons do still require some physical resources, especially since their powers are not what they once were. The court can offer those resources through its various vassals and demons who inhabit wealthy forms or control wealthy mortal thralls.

The infernal court also allows the fallen an opportunity to begin building up their own support networks and resources, strengthening themselves and the court in the process. It offers access to opportunities that the fallen who choose existence outside the court do not have.

PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE

They say that "pride goeth before a fall," and the fallen are prideful creatures. The court offers the opportunity to acquire prestige and influence among demons and more than a few are drawn to it because of that. For now the fallen on Earth are the only ones of their kind outside the Abyss (apart from the Earthbound), so they have the opportunity to take the reins of power while stronger demons remain imprisoned. Other fallen seek to reclaim the power they once had before their exile, perhaps even the power they had before the war, or the power of the Creator Himself.

Gaining power at court requires careful planning, allies, and perfect timing. The fallen go about their business while plotting against each other and looking for any signs of weakness in their adversaries. One wrong move can bring down a powerful leader and raise another demon up in his place. Then that demon must work carefully to protect her position against the sharks who begin to circle, looking for their own opportunities.

DIVIDED LOYALTIES

One of the greatest dangers and difficulties for the fallen within the court is the division of their loyalties. The demons of the court are pulled in different directions by their House, ministry, and faction, along with the needs and interests of their mortal host, their thralls, and by their own personal agendas. It can be a difficult balancing act keeping all of the various demands for their attention satisfied. One wrong move could spell disaster.

Maintaining the various duties and responsibilities are one thing, but matters become more complicated when the demands of a demon's various affiliations conflict. For example, members of the Ravener faction generally keep their affiliation quiet within the court, since the Raveners want to destroy all of Creation, something that many fallen do not want. When a Ravener Fiend belonging to the Ministry of Eagles discovers a potentially valuable piece

of information about the cult of an Earthbound demon, what do they do with it?

The answer depends entirely on where the particular demon's loyalties lie, and to what degree. Most of the fallen feel strongest about their faction, then their ministry, and finally their House. Still, House has a powerful influence over the way a demon thinks and acts, since it is a part of them, how they were made to be (and what they became during the war and their long exile). So a Ravener demon might "overlook" or "misplace" information about a nihilistic Earthbound cult that intends to wreck havoc because it fits in with her faction's goals. The trouble arises if and when another demon discovers this oversight and brings it to the court's attention. Of course, odds are good that the other demon has some indiscretions of his own, if only the Ravener can learn about them and use them to her advantage.

Therefore the infernal court is a patchwork of varying loyalties, held together by mutual need and kept from completely disintegrating by the amount of influence that individual demons hold over each other.

CREATING AND USING OTHER FACTIONS

The existence of other factions of the fallen is intended to allow Storytellers to create nearly any sort of faction or ideology for their **Demon** chronicles. Perhaps you want a faction of demons in your own chronicle that believes, for example, that the fallen should exert control over all of the supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness. What about a faction that believes they should punish human sinners (each in a manner befitting his or her sins)? Go right ahead and create them.

The default assumption is that these minor factions don't have the same broad appeal of the main factions described in **Demon: The Fallen** and expanded upon in this book. They might be splinter groups of existing factions or entirely new ones. If you want to substitute a faction of your own creation for one of the established ones, feel free, but keep in mind the overall effect it will have on the balance of power and the relations between the factions.

You can also run a chronicle based around the troupe starting its own faction within the fallen of a particular area. This could come from sincere beliefs on the parts of the characters or cynical self-interest that manipulates the beliefs of others, or a combination of the two. Characters as leaders of a fallen philosophical movement fit in nicely with the themes of faith and personal responsibility in **Demon**.

The reason that more fallen aren't exposed as traitors to one cause or another is the fact that they've got equally strong evidence against their accusers. It's often mutually-assured destruction to betray another demon's true loyalties, so the fallen are forced to plot and plan to cover up their own activities and to expose and bring down their rivals.

MORTALS AND THE COURT

Although the infernal court exists to serve the needs of the fallen, it cannot and does not overlook the teeming masses of humanity that the demons walk amongst on a nightly basis. It was love of humanity that first led the fallen to rebel and brought about the war, and feelings toward mortals run strong and deep within the infernal court. The fallen are by no means in agreement as to what they should do about humanity, only that mortals are important to them for various reasons, not the least of which is the faith (and therefore power) they can offer.

THRALLS

Of course, the fallen cannot remain completely unknown. They are dependent on human faith to sustain them, which means that they must reveal themselves, their true selves, to some mortals. The fallen seek out mortals in need (and what mortal does not need or want for something?). They promise them what they desire in exchange for their faith, their belief in what the demon represents. The mortals become the demon's thralls, bound by the terms of their pact, a living source of faith and power to sustain the fallen.

As far as the court is concerned, the cultivation of thralls is a personal matter for the fallen, so long as it does not endanger the court or its members. The fallen are free to pursue their own affairs and create pacts with whomever they wish, but they are expected to show a certain amount of discretion, or else they may expose not only themselves but their fellow demons to danger. In these matters, the court may be forced to take action.

The first step is likely to permanently silence a dangerous thrall (usually by killing them and disposing of the body). In some cases simple executions will only complicate matters, so the court uses threats and other coercion to ensure that the thrall will remain silent. In extreme matters, the court may dispose of the offending demon as well, cutting off the trail of investigators and providing an example for others on the importance of discretion.



In order to avoid the court's unwanted attention, demons are well advised to keep their thralls away from the court, and most do, since they prefer to keep their thralls in the dark about the true nature of the fallen. Most mortals who have dealings with demons have no idea that the infernal court even exists or, if they do, where it is and what it is like. Demons typically know roughly who in court has many thralls and who has few, but the identities of those mortals and the specifics of their pacts are harder to come by. This makes thralls useful pawns in games of power and influence within the court, allowing demons to struggle against each other by proxy while keeping their conflicts covert.

VASSALS

Unlike thralls, the primary purpose of a vassal is not to provide the fallen with faith but with more mundane forms of power and influence. While demons are beyond many mortal considerations, they must still exist within the mortal world, and they are both unfamiliar with many things and vastly outnumbered by the teeming throngs of humanity. They need protection from their enemies and resources, both physical and material, to carry out their various plans. Properly cultivated vassals provide these things.

Ideally, vassals have no idea that they ultimately serve demons from the depths of the Abyss, although often the leaders of a vassal may be aware of their true loyalties. A vassal is also ideally free of any thralls to eliminate potential conflicts of interest (and spies within its ranks). Like many things about the infernal court, these ideals often fall short of the mark. The court deals with any problems that arise around vassals as quickly as possible, but potential problems are often overlooked until they are brought to the court's attention or they become too serious to ignore any longer.

Virtually any gathering of mortals is a potential vassal for the fallen, but certain types of vassals are particularly common and useful. Here are some of the vassals that demons often cultivate:

- **Businesses:** Money makes the world go around, and the fallen were quick to understand the nature of both commerce and greed in the modern world. The court also requires certain material resources and services from discrete sources, so demons have good reason for cultivating various businesses as vassals. In many cases their dealings are strictly business arrangements. There are more than enough businesses that don't care where the money comes from. In some cases,

the court exerts more influence, either through the information gathered by the Ministry of Eagles (suitable for trade of blackmail) or by providing other "services" that someone in the dog-eat-dog business world might find useful (which usually leads to blackmail, sooner or later).

• **Government Agencies:** The fallen tread carefully here, but the government still has enough power and influence to be of interest to them, and they've found more than a few mortals in positions of power eager to accept what they have to offer. For the time being, the fallen have little interest in influencing the upper echelons of the halls of power. They focus their attentions instead on smaller branches of various agencies, influencing local bureaucrats and politicians who can arrange for alterations to public and private records, make problematic issues with the law disappear, and so forth.

• **Law Enforcement:** One of the most important areas of influence for the fallen is with those who enforce the law. It's necessary to ensure that the activities of the court are overlooked, along with those of individual demons. The Ministry of Eagles also benefits greatly from having contacts within law enforcement who can pass on useful information, while the demon lords can use law enforcement vassals as a means of dealing with renegades outside the court (although they must be careful not to reveal too much to their mortal pawns). Some of the fallen in the right places have even made connections with police departments and other agencies as "experts" on the occult and Satanic crimes. This allows them to uncover both rogue demons and their thralls and mortals who might prove useful thralls if they were introduced to a *real* demon.

• **Criminal Organizations:** From youth gangs and drug dealers to the highest ranks of organized crime, the fallen find many useful vassals among humanity's criminal element. These mortals already have the skills and the means to exist outside the law as the infernal court does, and their connections and resources can help smooth the way for the fallen as well. Demons have few qualms about working with criminals, of course, and they're capable of any number of useful and valuable services. Demon enforcers arrange to eliminate criminal rivals or potentially dangerous witnesses. They supply connections, money, and illegal goods in exchange for more of the same. In fact, in many ways, the infernal court functions much like a new, powerful syndicate in the underworld, one that most criminals learn to respect. Those who do not are taught a very painful lesson.

• **Religious Organizations:** Humanity's religious institutions are favorite targets for demonic scorn and

corruption. They're potentially dangerous, since they may educate humanity and give them the spiritual fortitude to resist demonic temptation (although they just as often lead people into temptation, for the fallen who know how to play it right). They're useful because they are focuses of human faith, sources of power for the fallen. The religious are often the first to believe in the existence and power of demons, whether they hate and fear them or worship them hardly matters (at least as far as a reaping is concerned). The fallen maintain ties with various religious organizations (churches, synagogues, temples, etc.) to keep an eye on the congregation, watch for signs of demon-hunters (see below), and exert their subtle influence over them.

• **Clubs and Associations:** People of like mind are given to gathering together in groups, and some of these groups can be useful to the fallen court, if only because they offer self-contained collections of mortals who can be influenced through a few key people. They are able to offer resources or simply information and insight in the mortal condition and human society. These range from professional associations (demon influence in the Bar Association is becoming common, with "devil's advocates" learning a great deal about the art of argument) to private clubs. The fallen are often drawn to fringe groups, from spiritual seekers (willing to accept guidance and offer their faith) to fetish clubs where demonic personae are seen as just the latest fad, and the fallen can set aside their masks with little fear, at least for a time. Knowledge of human involvement in some groups can also be a useful level of influence against the businessman who likes to frequent leather bars on the weekends, or the senator's wife who throws wild drug-parties.

• **Cults:** Faith is the source of the demons' power. Since they have lost the faith of the Most High, they are dependent upon the faith of humanity to sustain them. Therefore cults are often a demon's lifeblood. Cults are an individual affair, unless a particular demon's cult becomes a concern for the court in some way, usually by drawing unwanted attention from mortals. So long as they respect the boundaries the court lays out, the fallen are free to create and control cults however they wish, and they do. They also keep a close eye on the known cults and thralls of their peers, both because demons must compete to a degree for the choicest mortal followers, and because one never knows when an opportunity will arise to expose a rival to the court and bring them down.

Although some demonic cults are the sort that mortals might expect — secret occult groups devoted to "demon worship" of one form or another — most are

not quite so obvious. The fallen realize full well that stepping forward and announcing "I am a demon from the depths of the Abyss" is not the way to win friends and followers (at least, not right away).

Therefore, fallen cults take many forms, depending on the aims and abilities of the demon or demons who control them. The only real requirement for a cult is that the demon acts as a focus for followers' faith, and there are many ways of doing that. Demons often pose as gurus, mystics, spiritual guides, even priests or elders of established religions. There are many mortals seeking to believe in something, and the fallen have something powerful to offer them, even if it's not usually what it seems to be on the surface.

FAITH AND BELIEF

The central factor that governs the fallen's dealings with humanity is the demons' need for the power of human faith. This places the fallen in a paradox. In order to regain a measure of their powers, they must cultivate the dying sparks of faith in humanity, fanning them into flames, and forging pacts that allow the fallen to draw upon that power. At the same time, demons have to be careful not to give too much away about their existence and their activities to the wrong people. They understand full well that the power of human faith can be turned against them, and that a united humanity might even be able to destroy them, or least send them back to their eternal imprisonment, which would be an even worse fate.

Therefore, the fallen walk a narrow line between their need to inspire human faith and belief in the supernatural and their need to conceal themselves and their activities from the masses for the time being. There may come a time when the fallen are prepared to reveal themselves in all their glory to humanity, but that time is a way off yet, at the very least. For now, the fallen have to choose their time and place carefully, or else risk destruction at the hands of their enemies.

Most demons operate subtly when dealing with mortals. They look for those they can inspire and take them as thralls, while hiding their activities from others. This means secret networks of thralls and cults are common tools for the fallen, getting them what they need without undue risk.

The nature of human faith does work in the demon's favor in one way. Demon-hunters and other enemies have to work secretly as well, since the last thing they want to do is encourage human belief in the supernatural, which would only strengthen the fallen and give them more thralls to choose from. Also, mortal demon-hunters quickly come to believe in the existence of the fallen, which makes some of them

susceptible to becoming thralls, if they choose to enter into a pact with a demon. This allows the fallen to convert some of their enemies and make them into useful allies.

ENEMIES AT THE GATES

The fallen are well aware that they are not welcome in the world, at least not yet. After all, they still feel the sting of humanity's rejection from untold millennia ago, when they were exiled to the Abyss. The infernal courts have many potential enemies, although many of those enemies remain ignorant of the full extent of the court's power and influence (or even its existence, for that matter).

RENEGADES

Of concern to the infernal court is the matter of renegade or rebel demons, the fallen who have broken away from the hierarchy of the court and struck out on their own. They represent a potential threat to the courts that must be addressed.

Theories as to why the renegades have chosen the path that they have vary, but generally come down to two major possibilities. The first is that the possession of mortal flesh has influenced or weakened the renegades' souls in some way, tainting them with human weakness and desires. The fallen of the infernal court are aware of these urges — all embodied demons feel them to some degree — but the renegades seem to have fallen victim to them. Proponents of this theory believe that their wayward brethren can be cured of their condition, shocked back into their true selves, with some effort.

The other theory is that the renegades are traitors to the court and the lords of the Abyss, and that they have plans of their own. Perhaps they intend to overthrow the existing hierarchy and institute one of their own, to keep the gates of the Abyss closed so that they can rule over the world themselves. They may even plan to lead humanity in a crusade against their fallen brethren to create a new order, with themselves at the top. Paranoid conspiracy theories abound, each more elaborate than the last. Some even combine the two, saying that those who abandon the courts have been driven mad by their mortal hosts and seek the destruction of the fallen.

In either case, the renegades must be dealt with. For the time being, most high-ranking demons prefer to bring their wayward fellows back into the fold of the court, where they can be the most useful. No demon should be sent screaming back into the Abyss while



there is the possibility of bringing them to their senses. Therefore the courts move cautiously toward the goal of reclaiming their lost souls, for their own good as well as that of their kind.

DEMON-HUNTERS

One particular group of mortals that the fallen must be concerned about are those who are aware of the existence of demons and are prepared to take steps to return them to the Abyss, whatever the cost: demon-hunters. There was a time when the idea of the fallen being hunted down by humans would have been laughable, but now, weakened as they are by their long imprisonment and trapped in mortal flesh, and mortals wielding the power of their faith, demon-hunters are a serious threat.

Hunters operate under a veil of secrecy, since most mortals still believe that the "demons" that haunt people are psychoses, and those who claim to hunt them are insane. Still, the fallen have seen evidence that these hunters often work in groups and have allies. They share information among them and news of the discovery of a demonic presence is likely to spread unless it is contained. This makes concealing the activities of the court and

protecting it from discovery by demon-hunters of paramount importance.

The most serious concern about demon-hunters is their abilities. While most hunters are ordinary mortals with both the misfortune to know about the existence of the fallen and the fortitude to do something about it, some are more than that. The fallen have discovered that some hunters understand and can tap into the power of their faith and wield it as a weapon against them. Are these powerful hunters proof that Heaven has not turned away from humanity, but still finds ways to thwart the fallen in their efforts? Some demons are afraid that they are. Others believe they are examples of the potential of humanity, but either possibility is disturbing to the fallen.

THE EARTHBOUND

One thing the fallen quickly discovered when they began re-organizing their courts and establishing their ties to the mortal community was that some of their kind were already on Earth. Some of the Earthbound have been in the mortal world for many years, even centuries, and have had ample time to create vassals of their own. These powerful demons are not usually inclined to share with anyone, either.

Conflicts have occasionally arisen between mortals loyal to the Earthbound in one way or another and the newly-returned demons wearing human guises. Long-established demonic cults worshipping the Earthbound have become demon-hunters under their masters' guidance, tracking down and eliminating these new demons, or else bringing them before their masters so they can be offered the opportunity to serve the Earthbound (or be cast back into the Abyss if they refuse).

There are also questions about the Earthbound influencing the new infernal courts using converts among the fallen as well as infiltrating vassals with mortals loyal to them. Already there is talk of courts all but controlled by the Earthbound behind the scenes and directed toward their own mysterious purposes. Whether or not they are true, or were simply started by the Earthbound to sow dissent and paranoia, remains to be seen.

One thing has become clear to the infernal courts: the Earthbound, whatever their allegiances in the past may have been, are often loyal to none but themselves. They have their own plans for Creation, and they don't necessarily include freeing the rest of their kind from their imprisonment.

OTHER CREATURES

The fallen are by no means alone in the shadows of the world, and they know it. They share the stage with other creatures that the newly-returned demons know little of, although their knowledge is increasing with each passing night.

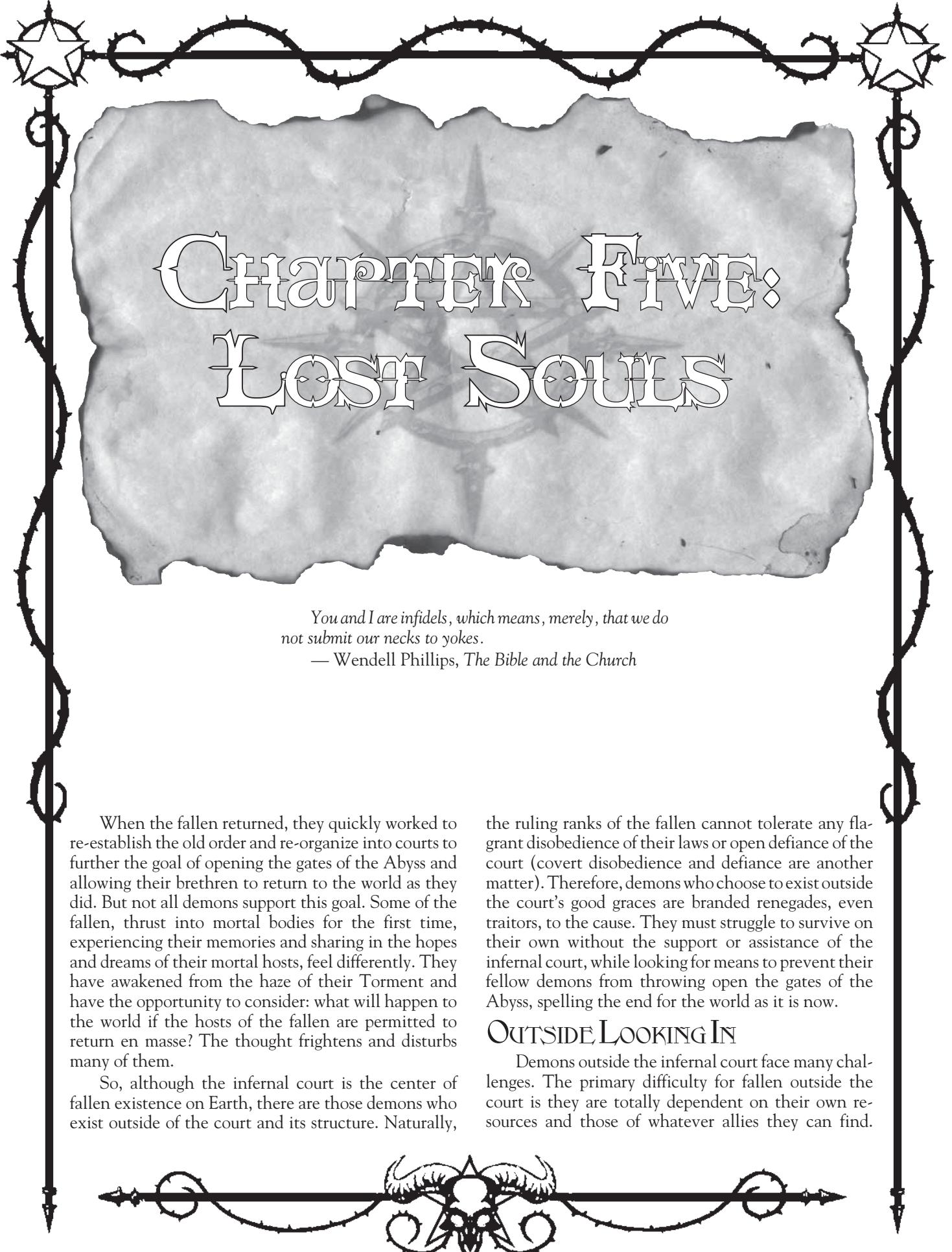
The fallen quickly learned of vampires, mortal corpses who feed on the blood of the living, and claim to be descended from a curse that the Creator laid upon their ancestor, Caine. They were already aware of the existence of ghosts, mortal spirits trapped in the shadowy realm between life and death, unable to move on to what awaits them. Generally, the fallen prefer to conceal their existence and their activities from these creatures, eliminating any who learn too much.

Demons have also discovered stranger things in the wild places and rural areas outside the cities where mortals congregate. There are monsters there, too: savage man-beasts, the walking dead, and other things. Most of them are too hostile for the fallen to learn much about them, but they are of little concern unless they become a threat to the demons or their plans; then they will be dealt with.

THE WIDE WORLD OF DARKNESS

It's up to individual Demon Storytellers how much they want to involve other elements of the World of Darkness in their chronicles. The existence of vampires, werewolves, and other creatures may be nothing more than a minor background element, or it could be the basis for an epic struggle between the infernal courts and the various other supernatural factions of the World of Darkness. For the most part, the fallen have little interest in other supernaturals, except where they pose a potential challenge to their plans.





CHAPTER FIVE: LOST SOULS

You and I are infidels, which means, merely, that we do not submit our necks to yokes.

— Wendell Phillips, *The Bible and the Church*

When the fallen returned, they quickly worked to re-establish the old order and re-organize into courts to further the goal of opening the gates of the Abyss and allowing their brethren to return to the world as they did. But not all demons support this goal. Some of the fallen, thrust into mortal bodies for the first time, experiencing their memories and sharing in the hopes and dreams of their mortal hosts, feel differently. They have awakened from the haze of their Torment and have the opportunity to consider: what will happen to the world if the hosts of the fallen are permitted to return en masse? The thought frightens and disturbs many of them.

So, although the infernal court is the center of fallen existence on Earth, there are those demons who exist outside of the court and its structure. Naturally,

the ruling ranks of the fallen cannot tolerate any flagrant disobedience of their laws or open defiance of the court (covert disobedience and defiance are another matter). Therefore, demons who choose to exist outside the court's good graces are branded renegades, even traitors, to the cause. They must struggle to survive on their own without the support or assistance of the infernal court, while looking for means to prevent their fellow demons from throwing open the gates of the Abyss, spelling the end for the world as it is now.

OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

Demons outside the infernal court face many challenges. The primary difficulty for fallen outside the court is they are totally dependent on their own resources and those of whatever allies they can find.



While court demons tend to be fairly independent, the court as a whole can still wield considerable power through its vassals and the collected resources of its members. Individual demons don't have that option, although some of them do gather considerable resources of their own. The more powerful and influential an outsider becomes, however, the greater the chances that the court will take notice and do something to deal with the upstart. In order to escape the court's attention, these renegade demons must keep a low profile, which, in turn, limits their power.

Outsiders also lack the court's protection against potential enemies. The Ministry of Eagles is always alert for potential threats to the court and the other ministries stand ready to deal with them. Independent fallen have only themselves and perhaps a few fallen or mortal allies to rely upon. When the demon-hunters come looking, not only won't they have any protection, but also the court may be willing to sell them out in order to divert suspicion from themselves. Of course, it can work both ways, and there's always the possibility that an outsider might give information about the court to hunters. All the more reason to limit what outsiders may know about the court and its business.

Even worse than demon hunters is the threat of the Earthbound, who sometimes take interest in lone demons or small groups they can approach and possibly sway over to their way of seeing things. If they can't seduce or bully the outsiders into joining them, the Earthbound can always destroy them, ensuring that a rogue piece is removed from the playing field. The demons of the court are concerned about the Earthbound recruiting outsiders, so they may attempt to get to them first, to either sway them or make sure they can never go over to the Earthbound side. (Although, a botched effort has the potential of creating new Earthbound demons, so some care is required.)

Outsiders have no real access to the collected knowledge and lore of the court. This means having to find out about important things going on in the mortal world on their own, for one thing, but it also cuts the fallen off from their past and their power. Those demons who returned and took mortal form often have fragmentary or incomplete memories of the time before their imprisonment, much less the time before they rebelled and the war began. The courtly fallen can compare notes, share recollections, and usually have the benefit of some of the most experienced demons. Outsiders have to rely on themselves and their contacts for knowledge of who they are and what they are truly capable of. They must rediscover their nature on their own, which makes struggling against their Torment that much more difficult. More than one outsider has asked

whether it is worth struggling with painful recollections rather than simply giving in to them and returning to the company of their own kind.

While some understanding of demonic lore and abilities is innate, a part of the fallen since they were made, a great deal of it has been forgotten by those who returned and must be relearned. The infernal courts are fast rediscovering the secrets of their lore and are using them. Those outside the courts have few choices for mentors and teachers. They often have to puzzle out the secrets of their lore alone, trying to find meaning and order in a universe in which they ceased to have faith long ago. Certain things have changed since the fallen were imprisoned, or at least they seem to have changed. Perhaps they remember differently than it actually was. Who can say?

Of course, the Earthbound are often willing to become mentors and teachers of the newly-returned demons, but their aid always comes with a price attached. Most outsiders aren't willing to pay it just yet, but as their need to learn more increases, some may reconsider.

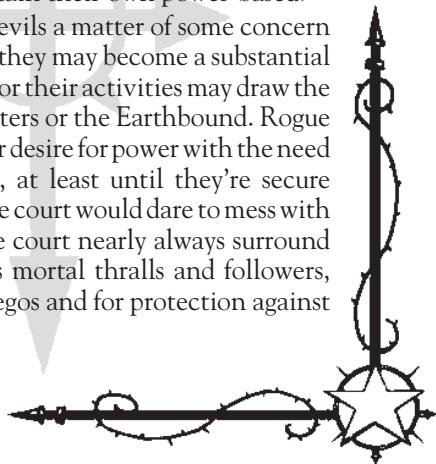
THE HOUSES ON THE OUTSIDE

Members of the various demonic Houses have different reasons and motives to exist outside the court, but each House has members who choose that route. Some find not having to deal with the court's restrictions liberating, while others try to create new structures to substitute for those of the court.

DEVILS

The factors that drive Devils to exist outside the demon court are arrogance and rebelliousness. The silver-tongued Devils are perfectly capable of gathering their own followings around them, and may adhere to the adage that "it is better to rule in Hell than serve in Heaven." Rather than being a minor cog in the demon court, a Devil can be a powerful and influential force in the mortal world, so long as he stays ahead of his enemies, both mortal and otherwise. Some Devils break with the court (or never accept it in the first place) in order to build and maintain their own power-based.

This makes rogue Devils a matter of some concern for the Pentarchy, since they may become a substantial threat to the court itself, or their activities may draw the attention of demon-hunters or the Earthbound. Rogue Devils must balance their desire for power with the need for stealth and subtlety, at least until they're secure enough that no one in the court would dare to mess with them. Devils outside the court nearly always surround themselves with various mortal thralls and followers, both to buoy their own egos and for protection against their enemies.



SCOURGES

More than a few Scourges prefer a solitary existence, walking among mortals. They were once powers of the wind, and the call of the open road (or open sky, as the case may be) is strong for them. Scourges outside the court are often rootless wanderers, traveling from place to place looking for things that interest them. A Scourge may be a mysterious traveling healer, who performs miraculous cures (possibly creating pacts in the process). Or the Scourge may be a serial killer winding its way across a continent, leaving a string of bodies in its wake, or even a vengeful plague that strikes down certain people swiftly and mysteriously, for no apparent reason. Demon-hunters carefully watch for signs of mysterious deaths, murders, and outbreaks of disease to show them the path of one of the fallen.

A wandering Scourge makes a useful assassin and executioner, or a helpful healer, if another demon is in need of either. Scourges can sometimes earn the favor of the court (or their fellow outsiders) by offering their services from time to time.

MALEFACTORS

Some Malefactors want nothing more than to be left alone to do their work, or else the court does not appreciate their particular creations, causing the Malefactor to look elsewhere for a place to work and build. Of all the fallen, Malefactors are the most likely to find patrons willing to provide them with whatever they want or need in exchange for their services. A Malefactor outside the demon court can usually find a wealthy mortal, influential outsider, or even a corporation willing to provide resources, shelter, and protection so the Malefactor can continue to make new and interesting things. Some Malefactors take these opportunities, moving on if their patron becomes too demanding or simply crosses the wrong party.

Other Malefactors prefer to remain completely independent, or as much as they can. They work "freelance" for anyone able to meet their price (which for mortals is often a pact) and remain carefully neutral in all things. The court may even be willing to overlook such behavior on the part of a skilled and useful Malefactor, especially one willing to work for the court as much as anyone else.

Finally, there are Malefactors motivated by things other than their artistry. It may only be a means to an end rather than an end in and of itself. These demons are often driven by the memories and needs of their mortal host and a desire to keep the hordes of the Abyss from returning to the world. They use their skills and abilities to further their goal, whether it is safeguarding a particular mortal

family, or undermining the court and the Earth-bound to protect humanity from their machinations.

FIENDS

Fiends are often solitary creatures to begin with. Their knowledge and insight often separates them from other fallen, who look on Fiends with a measure of trepidation. The motions of the heavens fascinate the Fiends, and often seem to drive them to do things according to signs and portents only they can see. While the Fiends maintain that they can see fate written in those signs, they sometimes disagree about exactly what that fate shall be. Many wonder if their ability to see the Creator's plan was lost in the Fall, leaving the Fiends with nothing more than delusions and vain hopes.

Where the Fiends are still powerful is in their ability to manipulate dreams and tug at the strands of fate. The Fiends who exist outside the court generally do so for one of two reasons. Their beliefs and insights (often guided by their moral host) no longer allow them to cooperate with the plans of the court, or they felt guided by a vision or portent to leave the court behind. Some Fiends wonder if they are guided by the unseen hand of their Creator toward some greater purpose, while others know only that what they are doing is right. In either case, Fiends use their lore to help safeguard themselves and others from the agents of the court.

Independent Fiends are forces to be reckoned with because of their skill in manipulating seemingly chance events. The good fortune or curses that they can bestow garners them various mortal thralls, and makes them useful to members of the court looking for some discrete assistance with a potentially sensitive matter. They're also still consulted as seers and oracles, although they more often than not take a direct hand in fulfilling their own prophecies.

DEFILERS

The Defilers are drawn to mortal society, but most are content to deal with it with the support of the demon court behind them. The Defilers who choose to exist outside of the court tend to simply vanish as far as most inquisitors are concerned. With their abilities, Defilers can assume almost any guise and blend perfectly into mortal society. The truth is that the demon court isn't even sure how many Defilers might exist outside their oversight. Perhaps some of the leads they uncover actually point to only a few Defilers with many different disguises and identities. Perhaps there are many. Most discount rumors that there are organized groups of Defilers outside the courts who share various identities, using them to keep outsiders in the dark about their exact numbers and activities.

Whatever the case, some Defilers thrive outside the restrictions of the court and take matters into their own hands. They gather substantial mortal followings using their keen understanding of basic human desires. They can provide what mortal society holds up as one of its greatest ideals: beauty. Who wouldn't be tempted by great beauty, eternal youth (or nearly so), and the fulfillment of their wildest sexual and romantic desires? The Defilers can provide all of those things, and do, for a price. This makes them influence-brokers and power players in their own right. A demon who needs to exist outside the court for whatever reason would do well to get in the good graces of a Defiler. They can provide contacts, arrange safe havens, and even give renegade fallen new identities (complete with new faces and bodies to match).

DEVOURERS

The Devourers within the demon court are typically good soldiers, eager to strike out against any threat to the court or the fallen. The pentarchy works to channel their aggression in ways that are useful to the court and don't expose it to unnecessary risk. The Devourers outside the court are those who cannot or will not submit to the pentarchy's restrictions, who want nothing to do with the endless political games, the subtle machinations, or the debate among their fellow demons. These Devourers want action and they want it *now*.

Some of them are savages given almost completely over to their animalistic nature. The modern world is a new jungle for these Devourers, with humanity as their prey. They inspire terror, pain, and despair and reap the faith that comes from the sure knowledge that one is Tormented by a beast from Hell. The demon court considers these renegades a most serious threat, since they draw the attention of mortal authorities as well as demon-hunters. Fortunately, they're also the fallen whom demon-hunters are most likely to discover and destroy, overlooking the court in order to focus on the more obvious and immediate threat.

Other Devourers show more restraint but are still fed up with the ways of the court. They have their own ideas about what needs to be done and they're not going to wait around while cowards and manipulators discuss the best way of doing things while making sure their own asses are covered. Instead, they strike out on their own.

Some have regained a small measure of their compassion for humanity and Creation and want to save them from their demonic brethren. They'll bring down the plans of the courts and the Earthbound and they're willing to sacrifice themselves like good warriors. Others are just the opposite, working with the Earthbound

or seeking ways to open the gates of the Abyss on their own, knowing that there will be a rich reward for the one with the determination and strength to do it. Finally, some Devourers actually turn away from the ways of war. They seek a kind of peace in the savage existence of the wilderness, untroubled by matters of civilization or demonic duty. All too often, they're not allowed to turn their backs on who and what they are.

SLAVERS

The demons of death have power like never before in the modern world, with the living dying in greater numbers than ever and the shadowy places between life and death havens for ghost and spirits the Slayers can influence toward their own ends. This has led some Slayers to ask, do they really need the support of other Houses, of the demon court, to further their ambitions?

Some Slayers prefer to rule over their own personal hells rather than kowtow to the pentarchy and the authority of the court. They choose isolated places of death — graveyards, morgues, battlefields, and such — as their homes and become the leaders of the ghosts that they find there. The opening of the Abyss caused a great storm in the underworld and scattered many ghosts to the winds. The Slayers offer them shelter and succor from the storm in exchange for their loyal service. And if a Slayer needs more followers, well, making more ghosts is a fairly simple matter....

Other Slayers were horrified by the prevalence of death in the world. They remember being gentle bearers of the final rest, taking living creatures and returning them to the earth so that they could nourish the next cycle of life. They keenly remember their anguish when death first touched humanity after the war began. Now they see their former charges suffering and dying in their teeming billions and their hearts weep of it. They see and hear the Tormented spirits in the shadow lands, eager for the release of Oblivion, but fearing what lies beyond that great unknown.

These Slayers take it upon themselves to become the champions of life they once were, using the power of death only to ensure the balance of the cycle, giving aid and comfort where they can. They will not permit the fallen to bring about the final death and dissolution of Creation, so long as it is in their power to prevent it. If they must destroy their fellow demons to stop them, then so be it.

THE FACTIONS ON THE OUTSIDE

Although the major factions of the fallen all find a place within the court, in order to influence the center of demon politics, parts of those same factions also defy the court. They believe they can better further their



ends by not becoming entangled in the affairs of others or courtly traditions. More than a few minor factions exist outside the court altogether, but all of the major factions are involved to one degree or another. Generally, the factions most influential within the court are the least common outside of it, and vice versa.

RAVENERS

These demonic nihilists are rare and secretive within the court, but outside of it the Raveners are many. No one knows exactly how many, but more than a few demons are concerned about the possibility of hordes of Raveners working toward their grim purpose. Some Raveners appear to be allied with the Earthbound, but most operate on their own or in small groups, aided by mortal followers and perhaps even ghosts or other creatures they have bound to them (particularly Slayer Raveners).

Raveners care nothing for the goal of releasing the fallen from the Abyss or of trying to keep them there. They only want one thing: destruction. The war is over and the fallen have lost. All they can do now is deny God the prize of His creation. If they are going to go down, then the whole damn universe is going down in flames with them. Demon politics and debates don't matter. Nothing matters, because it will all be rendered moot soon enough.

There are nearly as many Ravener plots for bringing about the end as there are Raveners. Right now, the Raveners are still newly-returned to the world, so they are in the process of laying the groundwork for their long-term plans. While some go off half-cocked with schemes to incite wars or bring about doomsday plagues, most Raveners are smarter than that. They bide their time and gather their strength. They spent untold millennia imprisoned in Hell. What are even a few more mortal centuries to plan the destruction of the world?

RECONCILERS

The Ravagers' opposite numbers in many ways, the Reconcilers often find themselves at odds with the goals of the court. The sparks of divinity within the mortal flesh they inhabit have awakened the Reconcilers' own divine nature. They do not want to open the gates of the Abyss except to help lead the other fallen toward redemption for their failings during and after the war. They want to heal the damage that has been done to Creation and help humanity reclaim at least some of the paradise that the fallen rebellion took away from them.

While some Reconcilers try to work within the court, to show others the way toward redemption and encourage them to do the right thing, many others consider the court a lost cause. They prefer to strike

out on their own to do what needs to be done in order to save the world, both from the fallen and from itself. These Reconcilers work, singly or in small groups, to help humanity. Sometimes they can only help change a single human life, but they believe that every little bit counts and helps to put them more in touch with their own divine nature, putting aside their Torment for a time.

The most influential and visionary Reconcilers have greater goals in mind: organizing to help more people and work major changes in the world. But those goals will take time, effort, and dedication to achieve, particularly if the court decides that the Reconcilers have gone too far and decide to step in and stop them. Thus far, the court tends to overlook the Reconcilers' good deeds, since they are of far less concern than other such as rogue Raveners or the Earthbound, but the court's tolerance will only stretch so far. The Reconcilers understand this and are preparing for the inevitable confrontation, knowing that the future of humanity and their own redemption hangs in the balance.

INQUISITORS

For many Inquisitors, the affairs of court are a necessary evil. The court provides the structure and support necessary for the fallen to exist in the mortal world, which in turn permits the Inquisitors to continue their quest for the truth. They feel it is their duty to support the court and maintain it, so long as it is useful to them.

But some Inquisitors believe that the court and its ways are a distraction from the truth at best, part of a subtle and clever trap at worst. How easy it can be to get drawn into the conflicts and political games of the court and neglect the true work of understanding the nature of things. These fundamentalist Inquisitors disdain court affairs for their solitary pursuit of their calling. Some even believe the fallen would be better off without any courts, left to their own devices, and see the court as a hindrance.

Naturally, these outspoken Inquisitors rarely fare well at court, if they spend any time there at all. Often they choose to exile themselves and focus on their studies of the secrets of Creation. Other times they are exiled by the pentarchy, or flee ahead of the Bull Host, threatened with arrest or worse because of their ideas. They generally want nothing more than to be left alone to do their work, but sometimes the work requires Inquisitors to involve themselves in the world. It may be that humanity (or its history) holds the key to understanding God's plan. Therefore, Inquisitors outside the court (sometimes in the company of allies) travel to far-flung places looking for pieces of ancient lore, or mortal scholars with potential insights.

FAUSTIANS

For the Faustians, faith is power, and power is all that really matters any more. After untold millennia of powerlessness and Torment, the fallen are presented with a veritable banquet of power that is theirs for the taking, so long as they don't get too greedy too fast. The Faustians within the court may be willing to share their power with others. Perhaps they hope that they can get the inside track on things before they throw open the gates of the Abyss and allow in ravening hordes of demons. Other Faustians are not so sanguine about their prospects once the Lords of the Abyss are given dominion of the Earth. They don't want to see the sweet deal they've got going spoiled in any way. They're also not interested in playing by the court's rules and limiting their power. They had to put up with millennia of limits. Now's the time for them to be free!

Renegade Faustians care about one thing and one thing only: the art of the deal. Every pact they make, every thrall they acquire, increases their personal power and gives them a new resources to protect their own interests in the world. Every thrall is faith that's denied to another demon, which keeps the Faustians ahead of the game.

The trick is to be subtle enough not to draw the court's attention, otherwise the pentarchy might decide that you're a threat and shut you down, forcefully. That means rogue Faustians are also quite good at diverting attention from themselves. Give the court other things to worry about, like an out-of-control band of Raveners or a demon-worshipping cult with no obvious ties to you that's drawing in demon-hunters. Move the pieces around on the board so that nobody knows where you stand, or that you're even there. That's the Faustian way of doing things.

LUCIFERANS

The fallen traditionalists are the strongest support of the court and its ways, but not all Luciferans are pleased with court affairs or how things are being handled.

First off, there's some concern that the pentarchs and their underlings are just a little too quick to seize power in Lucifer's name, but slow to put any effort into unraveling the question of their leader's whereabouts. It's hardly a secret that many of the fallen currently in positions of power are in no rush to discover what's become of their former leader. They would be delighted by evidence that Lucifer is no more, since it would allow them to cement the hold that they have over the court. None of them openly speak such treason, but it's common knowledge that doesn't sit well with those loyal to the cause.

There's also the increasing influence of voices that claim the war with Heaven is over, one way or another. Some demons claim victory, pointing to the state of the world as proof that the Creator has abandoned it to its fate, leaving the fallen to do what they will. Others say there is no hope of victory against the Hosts of Heaven. The best the fallen can hope for is to make a bearable existence for themselves in the world. Many Luciferans won't believe either claim unless or until they hear it from Lucifer himself (and perhaps, not even then). Only their leader can decide that the war is done.

In short, some Luciferans believe that discovering their leader's fate should be the greatest priority of the fallen. Since the courts seem to be dragging their feet on the matter, too bound up in politics and personal gain, it falls to the most loyal of Lucifer's followers to take up the torch. While few have completely broken ties with the court, some have gone off on their own in search of clues and leads that will give them the answers that they seek. While the courts do not openly condemn any demon searching for the Morningstar, there are certainly factions that do not want such evidence to come to light (unless it affirms their own power and position). Therefore, rogue Luciferans face challenges from shadowy opponents within the courts.

OTHER Factions

The number of other demon factions is almost too numerous to detail. None of these factions approach the size or influence of the major ones, even put together, so they are of little concern to the fallen as a whole.

Minor factions often come into being because of some conflict with the nature of the demon court and its affairs. A small group of fallen gathers around a charismatic and influential leader with radical ideas and split off from the court when they are unable to find a larger audience for their plans. Some splinter under the pressures of existing outside the court, with most of their members slinking back into courtly existence. Others manage to survive on their own, but rarely as anything other than fringe voices, steadfastly ignored by demons in the know who want to keep their own place and not antagonize the pentarchy.

DIVERGENT GOALS

What is it that demons outside the court want? That varies from one demon to the next, but there are certain things that all outsiders want and work toward getting and maintaining, which the courts may take away from them, if they're not careful.

SURVIVAL

The outsiders want to survive, just like the other fallen. Their challenge is surviving in a mortal world that would destroy them if given the opportunity,

without the support and assistance of the court and their fellow demons, except for perhaps other outsiders like themselves.

The memories and experiences of the mortal host are most useful to the demon in this respect. Without them, the fallen would be trapped in a world almost completely alien and strange to them. With them, they can deal with the day-to-day affairs of existence and often even continue to pass themselves off as the mortals they appear to be. Some may have difficulty explaining changes in their personality or even appearance, and so try and establish new identities for themselves, but others can masquerade as mortals with little fear of discovery, since in many ways they still are the mortals they appear to be.

Survival for the outsiders means hiding their demonic nature from most people, since they would likely be considered mentally ill (or demonically possessed by some insightful souls). Existence locked in an asylum isn't much of a step up from Hell, so the fallen try to avoid it. Even more important is the risk of attracting demon-hunters or world-be exorcists.

FAITH

The need to hide from the mortal world conflicts with what the fallen need most: human faith. Humanity has the divine spark within it that can give the fallen the power that they need to survive and to influence Creation, if only the demons can get hold of it and fan it into a flame. In order to do that, the fallen must reawaken humanity's belief in the supernatural, specifically in them, which risks exposing their true nature to a fearful, apathetic, and cynical race that once betrayed the fallen and left them to be exiled for all time. It's a tremendous risk, but it's also the only chance that the outsiders have to not only survive, but also prosper.

Like the infernal courts, renegade fallen have different views as to the best way to re-ignite the embers of humanity's faith. Some favor the expediency of terror and pain, but those things only feed a demon's inner Torment, something most outsiders want to avoid. Others create cults of personality or revive various religious beliefs as their tools, although this runs the risk of followers discovering that their "guru" or "messiah" is not all that he or she appears to be (or is all that he or she appears to be, in some cases). There are those demons who gather faith slowly, one person at a time, through carefully constructed pacts and deals. This is painstaking work, and outsiders often fear they don't have the time they need to gather their strength, not with the infernal courts and the Earthbound moving forward with their own plans.

Finally, there are those fallen who seek to empower humanity, to show them that the power is

within them, and all they need to do is believe in it. These demons act as mentors and teachers trying to work in harmony with mortals, inspiring and inflaming them, shaping and directing their faith, passion, and power. They're considered idealists at best, and some wonder what will happen if humanity does come into its true power? If the fallen are successful in getting mortals to realize what they are capable of, will they have any need for the crippled and Tormented souls of the once proud servants of the Creator? Will a reborn and empowered humanity turn their backs on the fallen once more, leaving them in a Hell as bad as the one they escaped from?

FREEDOM

For countless years, the fallen were imprisoned and tormented. Now they are free and they intend to remain that way, no matter what it takes. For outsiders, that hunger for freedom extends beyond the gates of the Abyss. It means freedom from the hierarchy of the court, from the requirements of other demons, from the demands of duty and responsibility. They have been trapped in Hell, now they want to live! They want to experience what the world has to offer them and follow their own goals and desires.

So they flee the court and its edicts, ministries, and rankings. They take up existences elsewhere and begin making the pacts they need to survive and prosper, gathering mortal thralls to supply them with faith and with whatever else they might need. Like mortals, the fallen often equate power with freedom, so they have to have power in order to secure their freedom (or so they tell themselves). But the more power they gain, the more likely they are to attract the attention of the court and be forced to move on, so they must limit their own freedom, so long as they exist outside the infernal court.

This leads some outsiders to decide that the only way they will ever truly be free is to eliminate the courts altogether, so that no one can exert influence over them or any of the fallen. These rebels are true anarchists, considered dangerous threats by other demons, and usually hunted down as enemies of the courts. They make renegade allies nervous, since they draw the attention of demon Watchers and Warders, eager to stamp out rebellion and any potential threat to the courts.

SOLACE

The mortal host awakens some fallen from their Torment for the first time in a very long time, giving them the chance to remember what they were and what they have lost. They cling to those memories and insights like a drowning man clings to a bit of flotsam, trying to stave off their Torment and regain a measure of their sanity and center.

This is one of the prime reasons why renegades leave the infernal court behind. They're no longer able to fit into demonic society, which is trapped within its own Torment. They go off to seek solace and redemption on their own, or in the company of a few like-minded demons. This makes the outsiders strange, sentimental, and weak in the eyes of their brethren, but other demons also secretly fear what the renegades might achieve. If they do truly find redemption, what will that mean for the infernal courts and the Lords of the Abyss? What will it mean for the rebellion itself and the cause for which they fought and suffered so much?

MORTAL LIFE

Some demons choose to exist in the world entirely on their own terms, apart from the court, the factions, and even the other members of their House to a degree. They want nothing to do with the politics or goals of the fallen or the affairs of the war. They may have their own particular agenda, but most often all they want is to be left alone. Unfortunately for them, that's the one thing their fellow demons cannot do.

Loners are often profoundly moved when they experience human memories and emotions for the first time. While the fallen fought and sacrificed for humanity throughout the war, and felt betrayed by their human charges afterward, they never truly experienced what it was to be human in so direct a fashion. The mortals whose bodies the demons inhabited were usually unfulfilled, leaving all their wants and needs, their hopes and dreams, for the fallen to experience.

Some of the fallen choose to maintain the life of their mortal host, as a useful fiction, if nothing else. They may feel some connection to people, places, and things from that mortal's life, and maintain those as well. But a few demons not only try to maintain their mortal life; they want to live it. They want to become the mortal whom they inhabit, as much as they possibly can, and forget about the glory of Heaven and the agony of Hell. They want to be just mortal, even only for a little while, and to experience a mortal death when their time has come.

Even outsiders who have not abandoned fallen existence feel the draw of humanity. It is the balm that soothes their Torment, and they desire to learn more about what it means to be human, as a means of better understanding their own fate. Whereas mortal existence is a mere façade to other demons, for outsiders, it is their hope and promise of salvation.

ENTERING THE FOLD

Demons outside the infernal court must be careful. One slip could end all their hopes of redemption at the hands of their fellow demons or frightened mortals,

demon-hunters, or any number of other enemies. Still, the fallen understand better than any how to fight a war against an intractable and seemingly all-powerful enemy. They did it for uncounted years, and are doing so again, when they must.

Renegades keep a close watch for signs of new demons returned from the Abyss. They often seek them out and offer them the opportunity to join their ranks, particularly if it seems that entry into mortal flesh and existence has cooled the fires of their Torment somewhat. Naturally, they compete with the infernal court to find these newcomers and recruit them, and they take serious risks in doing so, especially if the new fallen is still loyal to the old order, or entirely in the grip of its Torment.

Those outside the court also keep a close eye on its activities and its known fallen, especially for signs of discontent and growing touches of morality and awareness. They may approach such individuals and offer to help them overcome their Torment and leave the court behind. This, too, is a dangerous game, since there is always the possibility of spies, turncoats, and double agents. Fortunately, although the outsiders feel compassion for their brethren, they are not fools.

Newly recruited fallen are told fairly little about their new allies, since they cannot reveal what they do not know. Typically, a particular outsider will serve as

mentor and guide to the newcomer, or even a small group of them. At first, this demon's responsibility is to observe and help to guide the newcomers to a place of control over their Torment. Once it is clear that they are able to make decisions that are not entirely clouded by their own pain, they learn a bit more about outsider society and their newfound allies (and, perhaps, friends).

Outsiders often disagree on what newcomers should be told about the infernal court. Some favor full disclosure, making it clear what choices the newcomer has. They can go to the court or remain on the outside. Others think it's foolish to offer even the knowledge of the court's activities. If it's offered as an option, some will take it. Most walk a fine line in between, not withholding information, but not quick to tell others about the infernal court, preferring to focus on the work of helping fellow demons overcome their Torment.

BREAKING THE CHAINS

The key difference between the outsiders and the fallen of the court is that the renegades have some control over their inner Torment, they have awakened from it because of the nature of their mortal hosts, and have the opportunity to recall some of what they once were, and what they could be, if only they can hold on to their true nature.



For most renegades, the process of awakening from their Torment began when they inhabited a mortal host. Something about that mortal's memories and experiences acted like a splash of cold water or a slap in the face, allowing the fallen to focus on something other than Torment and misery, even for a moment. This experience allows some demons to awaken to the possibility of escaping their Torment, or at least learning to put it aside and deal with it. Demons who become part of the infernal court tend to quickly forget this experience, caught up in the plotting and pain of fallen society once more.

On occasion, the experience that weakens a demon's Torment comes later, usually from interacting with mortals. Something may stir memories in the mortal host — a familiar face, sight, smell, or sound — that overwhelms the demon's Torment with honest mortal feelings of fondness, duty, love, sadness, or any number of other emotions that show the fallen what it means to be mortal and alive in the world.

Renegades sometimes try to induce this experience for newly returned demons in order to shock them out of their Torment and allow them to find their own way. Often, it doesn't work, since epiphanies are notoriously difficult to induce. Sometimes renegades are successful in breaking through the shell of another demon's Torment, if only for a moment and bringing out the true self that has been trapped inside for so long. Encouraging the demon to recall memories of the mortal host has been known to help, particularly if someone knew that person well.

KEEPING SANE IN AN INSANE WORLD

Of course, that initial epiphany that allows some fallen to overcome their Torment doesn't last. Staving off the trauma that each demon carries inside is an ongoing struggle. The renegade fallen must balance the things they need to do in order to survive with the good of their souls. They try to regain some of the compassionate, giving, creative nature they once had and forgo cruelty, pain, and deception. It is difficult, since there are forces that want renegades destroyed or at least brought over to their side. Here are some things that the fallen do to help keep their Torment under control:

- **Good Deeds:** The renegades perform acts of kindness and charity in order to reinforce their own morality and sense of self. This ranges from helping mortals in need to finding newly-returned fallen and helping to bring them into the fold. The key is not the magnitude of the deed, but the sincerity with which it is performed. Small things can be as important as grand gestures when it comes to helping a demon to overcome Torment for another day.

- **Human Life:** Many fallen seek solace in the human existence that they have taken on. It was mortal experiences and memories that first returned the fallen to an awareness of who and what they had become, so demons often seek out other uniquely human experiences for the insight that the offer into their condition. This includes things like friendships, community, family, even romantic relationships. They may be things that the human host already had (but perhaps didn't appreciate) or new experiences that the fallen cultivate.

- **Solitude:** Conversely, some fallen seek to soothe their Torment through solitary contemplation and meditation. This is fairly rare, since demons had a virtually unlimited amount of time in exile to contemplate their situation. Anything too similar to the experience of being trapped in nothingness for all eternity tends to make the fallen nervous at best. Still, some find solitude on Earth far preferable to solitude outside of Creation.

THE LOST SOULS OF LOS ANGELES

This section describes some of the prominent renegade demons of Los Angeles, suitable for use as supporting characters in your **Demon** chronicle.

DIANA FOWLER (IZRAFHL)

House: Slayer

Diana Fowler grew up in northern California, but she came to Los Angeles several years ago to pursue her dream of making it big in the music business. She put together a band called "Foul Play" and they took their alternative sound, Diana's songwriting skills, and her forceful voice into the clubs, playing whenever they could, hoping to make it big. Like a lot of bands, and a lot of performers, that didn't happen.

Years of trying to make it, working odd jobs to make ends meet, and playing in some of the worst dives in the city took their toll on Diana. She got more and more into heavy drinking and drugs, and her music suffered, which only made her more depressed. She finally managed to drown her sorrows in a very deep pool of drugs and drinking and poured what was left of her soul down the drain. Her bandmates would have found her lying dead in a pool of her own vomit if Izrafhil hadn't found her first.

The Slayer rose up in Diana's body and what burned strongest in her mind was her love of music and her desire for success. Izrafhil, a lover of music from the time it was first created, found both Diana's gifts and her tragic end touching. Such simple dreams, so easily shattered. Izrafhil would make them come true, if not for Diana, then for her band. She wrote songs intended

to re-ignite the spark of faith in those who heard them, to show people they could believe in themselves if nothing else.

The band has suddenly become a *lot* more successful, and they're in negotiations with a major record label to sign a production deal. Diana's bandmates are aware of her true nature, although at least one of them wonders if she's simply snapped, or is putting on an act as part of her stage persona. Nobody can deny the transformation that she's undergone, or the effect it has had on her work.

For her part, Izrafhil has become a strong supporter of humanity, and hopes to find and reclaim some of her own soul through her work and inspiring others, both mortal and fallen. The monetary gains from the recording contract are just a means toward that end. It's the work itself that matters.

SEAN RHODES (KAFZIEL)

House: Defiler

Growing up in Montana, Sean Rhodes came to the realization that he was different, and that different was wrong and dangerous. He hid the fact that he was gay and waited for his chance to get the hell out of town. When the star of the high school football team convinced Sean to "help him out" in the back of his truck one night, Sean did. Then the guilt-ridden jock and some friends later tried to beat the crap out of him. That week Sean left Montana and got on a bus to California.

He found a job working at a gay bar in LA, and he quickly discovered there were a lot of opportunities for an eighteen-year-old gay boy in Los Angeles, if he was willing to take them. Cut off from his family, Sean was willing. His pictures appeared on several Internet porn sites and he was a big hit, leading to some live webcam appearances and offers to do videos. The money was good and the work... well, it wasn't as fun as it looked, but it sure beat bar-backing or flipping burgers.

With the money Sean was making and the clubs he was dancing in (both professionally and for fun) came the wealthy men who lusted after him, and opportunities to indulge in pretty much whatever he wanted. The Ecstasy and the K helped him to have a good time and not think about the old men groping him, or the things he had to do. It kept him from thinking about much of anything. It definitely impaired his judgment the night that he took too much GHB and ended up in a coma, abandoned by his latest trick.

Sean never woke up, but the demon Kafziel opened his eyes in a hospital bed. After an "amazing recovery," he returned to Sean's life and had few qualms about using his attractive new form to its best advantage. More than a few men asked him if he was an angel, and his answer was always "yes." Kafziel has

found something of a following in the sexual-minority community in West Hollywood and has thrown himself into a life of experiences to keep his Torment at bay. Like Sean, Kafziel is really looking for true love, but doesn't expect to find it.

LUIS ALVAREZ (THEGRI)

House: Devourer

Luis' parents came to East LA from Mexico looking for work, like so many people. His father worked all sorts of odd jobs to support his family. He was always so run down and tired. Luis didn't want that kind of life. He wanted to be somebody. He wanted respect, not to work like a dog for nothing. He found his respect by joining up with a gang. That gave him props on the street. He was going to be a big man.

When Luis got cornered and beat-down by members of another gang, his pain was a beacon to Thegri the Devourer, and the demon took residence in Luis' wracked body. Even a half-dozen mortals armed with chains and knives were no match for a demon warrior, and Thegri sent them scampering home. Word about how Luis took on six guys got around pretty fast, and Thegri found himself in possession of what Luis always wanted: respect and a reputation on the street.

The gangs of LA weren't all that unfamiliar to the devourer. He'd seen similar gatherings of humanity, and their structure wasn't that different from the hierarchy of the infernal courts. Their struggles and Luis' awakened in Thegri a desire to lead. Not just to dominate and rule, but to lead by example and to reclaim some of the honor he once had, as a soldier and warrior. He decided that he would lead these mortals, and he would find others of his kind willing to accept his leadership.

Luis Alvarez is a big man, and Thegri's following has grown. He's become more adept at finding those fallen newly returned to the world and offering them a choice: a life of freedom, service in the infernal court, or a return to the Abyss. Some have chosen to become Thegri's followers and allies. The court of Los Angeles is becoming aware of the devourer's presence, and may choose to take action against him. It is a war that Thegri is prepared to fight, and he intends to do whatever it takes to win.

MIKE SHAUGHNESSY (AZALAN)

House: Fiend

Mike Shaughnessy was a millionaire before he was thirty thanks to a degree in computer science, a knack for programming, and a willingness to work hard starting his own Internet company. Of course, Mike was also practically broke just a few years later when the bottom fell out of the dot.com industry and his fledgling company was one of the many casualties. He went from hot

shot on his way to the top to an unemployed unemployed, just one of many programmers out of work and looking for a job.

He found his way into a variety of menial jobs, but always things that were beneath him. He knew that he could get a new business going, but he couldn't secure the loans that he needed. That's when he started doing "freelance" programming on the side, a little hacking for clients who wanted information that they couldn't get legally. That got him some money, but it also earned him all the wrong kinds of connections. One mistake was all it took for Mike's new "friends" to decide that he was a problematic loose end.

Azalan awoke in Michael Shaughnessy's flesh and bone after he was left for dead. He saw the shape and pattern of the mortal's life, and the intricacy of his mind reminded him of the beauty of the motion of the

heavens. It had been a long time since Azalan had seen them. He used his own abilities and those of his new form to create a new identity for himself. He let others believe that Mike Shaughnessy was dead, then put his skills to work.

There is so much that Azalan needs to know, but he is sure the information is out there. In the meanwhile, there are more than a few demons and mortals willing to pay handsomely for his services and expertise, with no questions asked. He has even forged a few connections with the infernal court that way, although he's always careful in his dealings with them. He prefers to retain his independence. He won't be dragged back down into the Pit. Instead, he will keep searching for the truth, God's plan for it all, so that he can share it with others and bring them a measure of peace.